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THE

WORKS

OF THE

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THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION, ELECTION, AND REPROBATION.

1. THE ſcripture ſaith, † God *hath choſen us in* Chriſt, *before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love.* And St. Peter calls the ſaints, ‡ *elect according to the fore-knowledge of* God *the Father, through ſanctification of the ſpirit, unto obedience.* And St. Paul ſaith unto them, ‖ God *hath from the beginning choſen you to ſal-*

 vation,

† Epheſ. i. 4. ‡ 1 Pet. i. 2. ‖ 2 Theſſ. ii. 13, 14.

vation, through ſanctification of the ſpirit, and belief of the truth; whereunto he hath called you by our goſpel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

2. From all theſe places of ſcripture it is plain that God had choſen ſome to life and glory before, or from the foundation of the world. And the wiſdom of all Chriſtians is, to labour that their judgments may be informed herein, according to the ſcripture. And to that end let us conſider the manner of God's ſpeaking to the ſons of men.

3. God ſaith to *Abraham*, Rom. iv. 17. *As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even* God *who quickeneth the dead and calleth things that are not as though they were.* Obſerve, God ſpeaks then, at that preſent time, to *Abraham* ſaying, *I have made thee a father of many nations*, notwithſtanding Abraham was not at that time the father of one child, but *Iſhmael*. How then muſt we underſtand *I have made thee a father of many nations?*

4. The apoſtle tells us plainly, it was ſo, *Before* God *who calleth things that are not as though they were.* And ſo he calleth *Abraham, the father of many nations*, though he was not as yet the father even of *Iſaac, in whom his ſeed was to be called.*

5. God uſeth the ſame manner of ſpeaking, when

when he calleth Chriſt, † *The Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*; although indeed he was not ſlain for ſome thouſand years after. Hence therefore we may eaſily underſtand what he ſpeaketh of *electing us from the foundation of the world.*

6. God calleth *Abraham a father of many nations*, though not ſo at that time. He calleth *Chriſt, The Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*, though not ſlain 'till he was a man in the fleſh. Even ſo he calleth men *Elected from the foundation of the world*, though not elected 'till they were men in the fleſh. Yet it is all ſo before God, who knowing all things from eternity, *calleth things that are not as though they were.*

7. By all which it is clear, that as Chriſt was called *The Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*, and yet not ſlain till ſome thouſand years after, till the day of his death; ſo alſo men are called *elect from the foundation of the world*, and yet are not elected perhaps till ſome thouſand years after, till the day of their converſion to God.

8. And indeed this is plain, without going farther, from thoſe very words of St. Peter, *elect, according to the fore-knowledge of* God, *through ſanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience.* For,

If the elect are choſen through ſanctification of the Spirit, then they were not choſen before

† Revel. xiii. 8.

they were ſanctified by the Spirit. But they were not ſanctified by the Spirit, before they had a being. It is plain then neither were they choſen from the foundation of the world. But God *calleth things that are not, as though they were.*

9. This is alſo plain from thoſe words of St. Paul, God *hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* Now,

If the ſaints are choſen to ſalvation, through believing of the truth, and were called to believe that truth by the hearing of the goſpel, then they were not choſen before they believed the truth, and before they heard the goſpel, whereby they were called to believe. But they were choſen through belief of the truth, and called to believe it by the goſpel. Therefore they were not choſen before they believed; much leſs before they had a being, any more than Chriſt was ſlain before he had a being. So plain is it, that they were not elected, till they believed; although God *calleth things that are not, as though they were.*

* 10 Again, how plain is it, where St. Paul ſaith, that they whom † God *did predeſtinate, according to the council of his own will, to be to the praiſe of his glory*, were ſuch as did *firſt truſt in* Chriſt? And in the very next verſe, he ſaith that they *truſted in* Chriſt *after they heard the word of truth* (not before). But they did not hear the word before they were born. Therefore

† Eph. i. 11, 12.

fore it is plain, the act of election is *in time*, though known of God before; who, according to his knowledge, often speaketh of the things *which are not, as though they were.* And thus is the great stumbling-block about election taken away, that men may *make their calling and election sure.*

11. The scripture tells us as plainly what predestination is: it is, God's fore-appointing obedient believers to salvation, not without, but *according to his fore-knowledge* of all their works, *from the foundation of the world.* And so likewise he predestinates or fore-appoints all disobedient unbelievers to damnation, not without, but *according to his fore-knowledge* of all their works, *from the foundation of the world.*

12. We may consider this a little farther. God from the foundation of the world, fore-knew all men's believing or not believing. And according to this his fore-knowledge, he chose or elected all obedient believers, as such, to salvation, and refused or *reprobated* all disobedient unbelievers, as such, to damnation. Thus the scriptures teach us to consider *election* and *reprobation, according to the fore-knowledge of* God *from the foundation of the world.*

13. But here some may object, that I hold our faith and obedience to be the cause of God's electing us to glory.

I answer, I do hold, that faith in Christ producing obedience to him is *a cause without which* God elected none to glory; for we never read

of God's electing to glory, any who lived and died a disobedient unbeliever. But I do not hold, that it is the *cause for which* he elects any: the contrary of this is easily shewn thus:

Suppose my obedience is a cause of my election to salvation, What is the cause of my obedience? *Ans.* My love to Christ.

But what is the cause of my love to Christ.

Ans. My faith in Christ.

But what is the cause of my faith in Christ?

Ans. The preaching of the gospel of Christ.

But what is the cause of the preaching of the gospel to us? *Ans.* Christ's dying for us.

But what is the cause of Christ's dying for us?

Ans. God's great love of pity wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins.

14. Thus all men may see, that I do not hold God chose any man to life and salvation for any good which he had done, or for any which was in him, before he put it there. And this I shall now shew more at large from the oracles of God.

1. God's great love of pity, wherewith he loved the sons of men, even while they were dead in trespasses and sins, was the cause of his sending his Son to die for them; as appears from the following scriptures; †God *so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end that all who believe in him, should not perish but have everlasting life.* For ‡ *when we were yet without*

† John iii. 16. ‡ Rom. v. 6, &c.

without ſtrength, in due time Chriſt *died for the ungodly.* And, God *commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet ſinners,* Chriſt *died for us.*

2. Chriſt's dying for our ſins is the cauſe of the goſpel's being preached to us, as appears from thoſe ſcriptures, ¶ Jeſus *came and ſpake unto them, ſaying, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations.* †*Go ye into all the world and preach the goſpel to every creature.*

3. The goſpel's being preached to ſinners is the cauſe of their believing, as appears from thoſe ſcriptures, ‡ *How ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how ſhall they hear without a preacher? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of* God.

4. Men's believing is the cauſe of their juſtification, as appears from thoſe ſcriptures, ‖ *By him all that believe are juſtified from all things.* § *He is the Juſtifier of all that believe in* Jeſus. *Therefore we conclude that a man is juſtified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* ¶¶ Abraham *believed* God, *and it was imputed to him for righteouſneſs. Now it was not written for his ſake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us alſo to whom it ſhall be imputed, if we believe on him that raiſed up* Jeſus *from the dead; who was de-*

¶ Matt. xxviii. 18. † Mark xvi. 15. ‡ Rom. x. 15, &c.
‖ Acts xiii. 39. § Rom. iii. 26, &c. ¶¶ Rom. iv. 3, 23, &c.

livered for our offences, and rose again for our justification.

5. Our knowing ourselves justified by faith is the cause of our love to Christ, as appears from these scriptures, † *Herein is love, not that we loved* God, *but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* ‡ *We love him, because he first loved us.*

Our love to Christ is the cause of our obeying him, as appears from those scriptures, ‖ *If ye love me, keep my commandments. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* And, *If any man love me, he will keep my words.* § *For this is the love of* God, *that we keep his commandments.*

7. Our obeying Christ is the cause of his giving us eternal life, as appears from those scriptures, †† *Not every one that saith unto me,* Lord, Lord, *shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.* ‡‡ *Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in thro' the gates into the city.* And ⁂ Christ *being made perfect thro' sufferings, he became the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him.*

15. This may be more briefly expressed thus:

1. God's love was the cause of his sending his Son to die for sinners.

2. Christ's

† 1 John iv. 10. ‡ 1 John iv. 19. ‖ John xiv. 15, 21, &c. § 2 John v. 3. †† Matt. vii. 21. ‡‡ Rev. xxii. 14. ⁂ Heb. v. 9.

2. Chriſt's dying for ſinners is the cauſe of the goſpel's being preached.

3. The preaching of the goſpel is the cauſe (or means) of our believing.

4. Our believing is the cauſe (or condition) of our juſtification.

5. The knowing ourſelves juſtified thro' his blood, is the cauſe of our love to Chriſt.

6. Our love to Chriſt is the cauſe of our obedience to him.

7. Our obedience to Chriſt is the cauſe of his becoming the author of eternal ſalvation to us.

16. Theſe following things therefore ought well to be conſidered by all that fear God.

1. There was a neceſſity of God's love in ſending his Son to die for us, without which he had not came to die.

2. There was a neceſſity of Chriſt's love in dying for us, without which the goſpel could not have been preached.

3. There was a neceſſity of the goſpel's being preached, without which there could have been no believing.

4. There is a neceſſity of our believing the goſpel, without which we cannot be juſtified.

5. There is a neceſſity of our being juſtified by faith in the blood of Chriſt, without which we cannot come to know that he *loved us and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood.*

6. There is a neceſſity of our knowing his love, who firſt loved us, without which we cannot love him again.

7. There is a neceſſity of our loving him, without which we cannot keep his commandments.

8. There is a neceſſity of our keeping his commandments, without which we cannot enter into eternal life.

By all which we ſee, that there is as great a neceſſity of our keeping the commandments of God, as there was of God's ſending his Son into the world, or of Chriſt's dying for our ſins.

17. But for whoſe ſins did Chriſt die? Did he die for *all* men, or but for *ſome?*

To this alſo I ſhall anſwer by the ſcriptures, ſhewing 1. The teſtimony of all the prophets. 2. Of the angel of God. 3. Of Chriſt himſelf. And 4 Of his apoſtles.

Firſt, the prophet *Iſaiah* ſaith thus † *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our ſorrows: yet did we eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of* God *and afflicted. But he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities, the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes we are healed. All we like ſheep, have gone aſtray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.* Thus Iſaiah ſheweth plainly, that the iniquities

† Iſaiah liii. 4, 5, 6.

quites of all thoſe who went aſtray, were laid upon Chriſt. And to him the teſtimony of all the other prophets agreeth : † *To him give all the prophets witneſs, that thro' his name whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.* The ſame faith that great prophet, John the Baptiſt, who ‡ *came to bear witneſs of the light, that* all men *thro' it might believe.* And again, ‖ *Behold, ſaith he, the Lamb of* God, *that taketh away the ſin* of the world. Thus have all the prophets with one conſent teſtified that God *laid upon* Chriſt *the iniquities of all* that were *gone aſtray:* that he is *the Lamb of* God *which taketh away the ſin of the world; that all men thro' him may believe:* and that *thro' his name whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.*

Secondly, The angel of God teſtified the ſame thing, ſaying, § *Fear not; for I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people,* which was, that there was *born unto them a Saviour, even Chriſt the Lord.* By this alſo it appears, that Chriſt died for all men. For elſe it could not have been glad tidings of great joy to all people; but rather ſad tidings to all thoſe for whom he died not.

Thirdly, We come now to the words of Chriſt himſelf, who knew his own buſineſs better than any man elſe; and therefore if his teſtimony agree with theſe, we muſt needs be convinced that

† Acts x. 43. ‡ John i. 7. ‖ Verſe 29. § Luke ii. 10.

that they are true. Now he ſpeaks thus, ‡ *As Moſes lifted up the ſerpent in the wilderneſs, even ſo muſt the Son of Man be liſted up, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. For God ſent not his Son to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be ſaved.* Thus we ſee the words of Chriſt agree with the words of the prophets; therefore it muſt needs be owned that Chriſt died for all.

Fourthly, And now we will hear what the apoſtles ſay concerning this thing. § *The love of Chriſt*, ſaith the apoſtle Paul, *conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him that died for them, and roſe again.* And to Timothy he ſaith, ‖ *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Chriſt Jeſus, who gave himſelf a ranſom for all, to be teſtified in due time.* Again, he ſaith to Titus, † *The grace of God, which bringeth ſalvation to all men, hath appeared.* And yet again to the Hebrews, ‡‡ *That he, by the grace of God, taſted death for every man.* And to this agreeth St. John, witneſſing, §§ *He is the propitiation for our ſins; and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of the*

‡ John iii. 14, &c. § 2 Cor. v. 14, &c. ‖ 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. † Tit. ii. 11. ‡‡ Heb. ii. 9. §§ 1 John ii. 2.

the whole world. And again, ſpeaking of himſelf and the reſt of the apoſtles, he ſaith, ‖ *We have ſeen and do teſtify that the Father ſent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* Thus we have the teſtimony of all the prophets, of the angel of God, of Chriſt himſelf, and of his holy apoſtles, all agreeing together in one to prove, that Chriſt died for all mankind.

18. What then can they, who deny this ſay? Why, they commonly ſay, *All men*, in theſe ſcriptures, does not mean *all men*, but only *the elect*; that *every man* here does not mean *every man*, but only every one of the elect; that *the world* does not mean *the whole world*, but only the world of believers; and that *the whole world*, in St. John's words, does not mean *the whole world*, but only the whole world of the elect.

19. To this ſhameleſs, ſenſeleſs evaſion, I anſwer thus:

If the ſcripture no where ſpeaks of a world of believers or elect, then we have no ground, reaſon, pretence, or excuſe for ſaying, Chriſt died only for a world of believers or elect. But the ſcripture no where ſpeaks of ſuch a world. Therefore we have no ground or pretence for ſpeaking thus.

Nay, the ſcripture is ſo far from calling believers or elected perſons, *the world*, that they are every where in ſcripture plainly and expreſly diſtin

‖ 1 John iv. 14.

diſtinguiſhed from *the world.* † *If ye were of the world*, ſaith Chriſt, *the world would love its own; but becauſe I have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

20. But let the ſcripture itſelf ſpeak, what world Chriſt died for. ‡ *When we were yet without ſtrength, Chriſt died for the ungodly. While we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* From all which we may clearly ſee, that Chriſt died for the *world of the ungodly*, for the *world of ſinners*, for the *world of his enemies*; the Juſt One for the *world of the unjuſt*. But the elect, as elect, are not unjuſt. Therefore he died not for the elect, as elect; but even for that world St. John ſpeaks of, when he ſays, *The whole world lieth in wickedneſs.*

21. If it be ſaid, "The elect were ſinners once as well as others;" I anſwer, true; but not *as they are elect in Chriſt*, but as they were *out of Chriſt, without hope and without God in the world.* Therefore, to ſay that Chriſt died for the elect, as elect, is abſolute nonſenſe and confuſion.

22. To put this matter out of doubt, I would commend theſe following conſiderations to all ſober-minded men.

1. The ſcripture ſaith, *Chriſt came to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt.*

But the elect, as elect, were not loſt.

Therefore Chriſt died not for the elect, as

or

† John xv. 19. ‡ Rom. v. 6—10.

or becauſe they were elect; for that had been to ſeek and ſave what was found and ſaved before.

2. The ſcripture ſaith, Chriſt died for *the unjuſt.*

But the elect, as ſuch, are not unjuſt.

Therefore, Chriſt died not for the elect, as elect; for that had been to juſtify them who were juſt before.

3. The ſcripture ſaith, *He came to preach deliverance to the captives.*

But the elect, as elect, are not captives; for Chriſt hath ſet them free.

Therefore he died not for the elect, as elect; for that had been to ſet them at liberty who were at liberty before.

4. The ſcripture ſaith, *He quickened them who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, ſuch as were without Chriſt, aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael and ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe, without hope and without God in the world.*

But the elect, as ſuch, are not *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins,* but *alive unto* God. Neither are they *without* Chriſt; for they are choſen *in him*; nor are they *aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe.* But they are *fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and the houſhold of* God.

Therefore Chriſt died not for the elect, as or becauſe they were elect. For that had been to quicken

quicken them that were alive before, and to bring them into covenant, who were in covenant before. And thus, by theſe mens account our Lord loſt his labour of love, and accompliſhed A SOLEMN NOTHING.

23. Thus having ſhewn the grievous folly of thoſe who ſay, that *Chriſt died for none but the elect*, I ſhall now prove by undeniable reaſons, that *he died for all mankind.*

Reaſ. 1. Becauſe all the prophets, the angel of God, Chriſt himſelf, and his holy apoſtles with one conſent, affirm it.

Reaſ. 2. Becauſe there is not one ſcripture, from the beginning of Geneſis to the end of the Revelation, that denies it, either negatively, by ſaying, that *he did not die for all*; or affirmatively, by ſaying, that *he died but for ſome.*

Reaſ. 3. Becauſe he himſelf commanded, that the goſpel ſhould be preached to *every creature.*

Reaſ. 4. Becauſe *he calleth all men, every where, to repent.*

Reaſ. 5. Becauſe thoſe who periſh are damned for *not believing in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* Therefore, he muſt have died for *them.* Elſe they would be damned *for not believing a lye.*

Reaſ. 6. Becauſe they which are damned might have been ſaved. For thus ſaith the word of God. † *They received not the love of the truth that*

† 2 Theſſ. ii. 10.

that they might be saved. Therefore God shall send them strong delusions, to believe a lye, that they all may be damned.

Reas. 7. Because some *deny the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.* But they could not *deny the Lord that bought them,* if he had not bought them at all.

24. I shall now briefly shew the dreadful absurdities that follow from saying *Christ died only for the elect.*

1. Christ died not for all, then unbelief is no sin in them that finally perish; seeing there is not any thing for those men to believe unto salvation, for whom Christ died not.

2. If Christ died not for all, then it would be a sin in the greatest part of mankind to believe he died *for them*; seeing it would be to believe a lye.

3. If Christ died not for those that are damned, then they are not damned for unbelief. Otherwise, you say, that they are damned for not believing a lye.

4. If Christ died not for all, then those who obey Christ by going and preaching the gospel to every creature, as glad tidings of grace and peace, of great joy *to all people*, do sin thereby, in that they go *to most people* with a lye in their mouth.

5. If Christ died not for all men, then God is not in earnest in *calling all men every where to repent;*

pent : for what good could repentance do thofe, for whom Chrift died not ?

6. If Chrift died not for all, then why does he fay *he is not willing any fhould perifh?* Surely he is willing, yea, refolved that moft men fhould perifh ; elfe he would have died for them alfo.

7. How fhall God *judge the world by the man* Chrift Jefus, if Chrift did not die for the world ? Or how fhall he judge them *according to the gofpel*, when there was never any gofpel or mercy for them ?

* 25. But, fay fome, " If Chrift died for all, why are not all faved ?"

I anfwer, *Becaufe they believe not in the name of the only begotten Son of* God. Becaufe God *called, and they refufed to anfwer ; he ftretched out his hand, and they regarded not ; he counfelled them, but they would none of his counfels* ; he reproved them ; but *they fet at nought all his reproofs ; they followed after lying vanities, and forfook their own mercies* ; they *denied the* Lord *that bought them, and fo brought upon themfelves fwift deftruction* ; and *becaufe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be faved, therefore* (if you would know wherefore) God *gave them up to believe a lye*, and to be damned. *How often* (faith our Lord) *would I have gathered you together*, and ye would not ? *Ye would not.* Here is the plain reafon, why all men are not faved. For God promifeth no man falvation, whether he will or no ; but leaveth them to everlafting deftruction,

deſtruction, who will not *believe and obey the goſpel.*

26. " O, then you are an *Arminian!* You are a *free-willer.* You hold free-will in man!"

I hold nothing but what the ſcripture ſaith; and that you ſhall give me leave to hold. I do not hold, that any man has any will or power of himſelf to do any thing that is good; but by the grace of God we may do all things. I have already ſhewn, he hath given Chriſt for all men. And *he who ſpared not his own Son but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* And what man knoweth not that if he make uſe of all the will and power God hath given him, God will double his talent and give him more? If any therefore deſire to have more, let him faithfully improve what he has. Likewiſe what man is he, who doth not know that he is not condemned *for not doing what he could not do,* but *for leaving undone what he could have done if he would.* Let any man deny it if he can.

27. " What then, may all men be ſaved if they will?"

Before I anſwer this queſtion directly, I ſhall ſhew that thoſe who aſk it, are themſelves compelled to grant as much freedom of will, as we deſire to plead for.

For 1. The Aſſembly of Divines, in their confeſſion of faith C. 9. do expreſsly ſay, God *hath endowed the will of man with that natural liberty*

that

that it is neither forced, nor by any abſolute neceſſity determined to do good or evil. 2. *Mr. Baxter* in the preface of his *call to the unconverted*, ſays that *Calvin as well as* Arminius *held free will, and that no man of brains denieth, that man hath a will that is naturally free; it is free from violence, it is a ſelf-determining principle.* Sure here is as much ſaid for free-will, as any man need to ſay, and perhaps more. For,

The difference between us, is this. They ſay, *Man hath a will which is naturally free.* We ſay, *Man hath this freedom of will, not naturally, but by grace.*

We believe, that in the moment Adam fell, he had no freedom of will left; but that God, when of his own free-grace he gave the promiſe of a Saviour to him and his poſterity, graciouſly reſtored to mankind a liberty and power to accept of proffered ſalvation. And in all this, man's boaſting is excluded; the whole of that which is good in him, even from the firſt moment of his will, being of grace and not of nature. And now we come directly to the queſtion, whether all men may be ſaved if they will?

28. To thoſe who have conſidered what has been premiſed; I anſwer, 1. What ſhould hinder them, if they be willing? For 2. God is not willing that any ſhould periſh; yea, 3. He is willing that all men ſhould be ſaved. And Chriſt is willing; for he *came not to judge the world, but to ſave the world.* And how did he

weep

weep over Jeruſalem? How often would he have gathered them together, even as an hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not? And now what hinders mens ſalvation, but that ſame, *they would not?*

29. They would not; they will not come at Chriſt's call, and hearken to his reproof, and wait for his counſels, and receive power from on high to live to him who died for them, walking in all his commandments and ordinances blameleſs, and following him witherſoever he goeth. This way is ſo narrow that few care to walk therein; and therefore they are not ſaved even becauſe *they reject the counſel of God againſt themſelves.* They choſe death; therefore they periſh everlaſtingly.

An EXTRACT from a

Short View of the DIFFERENCE

BETWEEN THE

MORAVIAN BRETHREN,

(SO CALLED)

And the Rev. Mr. *John* and *Charles Wesley*.

To the READER.

AS those who are under the direction of Count Zinzendorf *(vulgarly called* Moravian brethren *are the most plausible, and therefore far the most dangerous, of all the* Antinomians *now in* England, *I first endeavour to guard such as are simple of heart, against being taken by those cunning hunters. Mr.* Cudworth's *writings (though less considerable) are likewise frequently cited, in the dialogue that follows.*

A short VIEW, &c.

THE difference between the *Moravian* doctrine and ours, (in this respect) lies here: They believe and teach,

1. That *Christ* has *done all which was necessary*, for the salvation of all mankind.

2. That consequently, we are to *do nothing*, as necessary to salvation, but simply *to believe* in him.

3. That there is but *one duty* now, but *one command*, viz. *To believe* in Christ.

4. That Christ has taken away all other *commands* and duties, having wholly *abolished the law:* that a believer is therefore *free from the law*, is not *obliged* thereby to do or omit any thing; it being inconsistent with his *liberty* to do any thing as *commanded.*

5. That we are *sanctified wholly* the moment we are justified, and are neither *more* nor *less holy* to the day of our death; *entire sanctification*, and entire justification, being *in one and the same* instant.

6. That a believer is never sanctified or holy *in himself*, but *in Christ* only; he has *no holiness in himself* at all, all his holiness being *imputed*, not *inherent.*

7. That if a man regards prayer, or searching the ſcriptures, or communicating, as *matter of duty*; if he judges himſelf *obliged* to do theſe things, or is *troubled* when he does them not; he is in *bondage*; he has *no faith* at all, but is ſeeking ſalvation by the works of the law.

We believe that the firſt of theſe propoſitions is ambiguous, and all the reſt utterly falſe.

1. "Chriſt has *done all that was neceſſary*, for the ſalvation of all mankind."

This is ambiguous. Chriſt has not *done all* which was neceſſary for the *abſolute ſalvation* of all mankind. For notwithſtanding all that Chriſt has done, he that believeth not ſhall be damned. But he has *done all* which was neceſſary for the *conditional ſalvation* of all mankind; *i. e.* if they believe; for through his merits all that believe to the end, with the faith that worketh by love, ſhall be ſaved.

2. "We are *to do nothing* as neceſſary to ſalvation, but ſimply *to believe* in him."

If we allow the Count's definition of faith (ſixteen diſcourſes, p. 57.) viz. *The hiſtorical knowledge of this truth, that* Chriſt *has been a man and ſuffered death for us*, then is this propoſition directly ſubverſive of the whole revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.

3 "There is but *one duty* now, but *one command*, viz. *To believe in* Chriſt."

Almoſt every page in the New Teſtament, proves the falſhood of this aſſertion.

4. "Chriſt

4. " Chriſt has taken away all other commands and duties, having wholly aboliſhed the law."

How abſolutely contrary is this to his own ſolemn declaration! *Think not that I am come to deſtroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil. One jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till heaven and earth paſs.*

" Therefore a believer is *free from the law.*" That he is *free from the curſe of the law* we know, and that he is *free from the law*, or power, *of ſin and death.* But where is it written, that he is *free from the law of* God.

" He is not *obliged* thereby to do or omit any thing, it being inconſiſtent with his *liberty* to do any thing as *commanded.*"

So *your* liberty, is a liberty to *diſobey* God; whereas *ours* is, a liberty to *obey* him in all things. So groſsly, while *we eſtabliſh* the law, do *you make void* the law through faith.

5. " We are *ſanctified wholly* the moment we are juſtified, and are neither *more nor leſs holy* to the day of our death: *entire ſanctification* and entire juſtification being in *one and the ſame* inſtant."

Juſt the contrary appears both from the tenor of God's word, and the experience of his children.

* 6. " A believer is never ſanctified or holy *in himſelf*, but in Chriſt only. He has no holineſs

in himself at all; all his holiness being *imputed*, not *inherent.*"

Scripture-holiness is, the image of God; the mind which was in Christ; the love of God and man; lowliness, gentleness, temperance, patience, chastity. And do you coolly affirm, that this is only imputed to a believer, and that he has none at all of this holiness in him? Is temperance *imputed* only to him that is a drunkard still? Or, chastity, to her that goes on in whoredom? Nay; but a believer is *really* chaste and temperate. And if so, he is, thus far, holy *in himself.*

* Does a believer love God or does he not? If he does he has the love of God in him. Is he lowly, or meek, or patient at all? If he is, he has these tempers *in himself.* And if he has them not *in himself*, he is not lowly, or meek or patient. You cannot therefore deny, that every believer has holiness *in*, though not *from*, himself: else you deny, that he is holy at all; and if so, he cannot see the Lord.

* And indeed, if holiness in general be the mind which was in Christ, what can any one possibly mean by, "A believer is not holy *in himself*, but in Christ only? That the mind which was in Christ is in a believer also; but it is in him, not *in himself*, but *in Christ!*" What a heap of palpable self-contradiction, what senseless jargon is this?

7. "If a man regards prayer, or searching the scriptures, or communicating, as *matter of duty*, if

if he judges himself *obliged* to do these things, or is *troubled*, when he does them not, he is *in bondage* he has *no faith* at all, but is seeking salvation by the works of the law,"

Thus *obedience* with you is a proof of *unbelief*, and disobedience a proof of faith! What is it, to put darkness for light, and light for darkness, if this is not?

An EXTRACT from a

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN AN

ANTINOMIAN *and his* FRIEND.

Antinomian.

DO you believe, that the *whole work of man's salvation, was accomplished by* Jesus Christ *on the cross?*

Friend. I believe, that by that one offering, he made a full satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.

A. But do you believe that *Christ's blood and our sins went away together?*

F. To say the truth I do not understand it.

A. No! Why did not Christ, *when he was upon the cross, take away, put an end to, blot out and utterly destroy all our sins for ever?*

F. He did then pay the price, for the sake of which all who truly believe in him, are now saved from their sins; and if they endure to the end shall be saved everlastingly. Is this what you mean?

A. I mean he did then *heal, take away, put an end to, and utterly destroy all our sins.*

F. Did he then *heal* the wound before it was made? And put an *end* to our sins, *before* they had a beginning? This is so glaring, palpable an absurdity, that I cannot conceive how you can swallow it.

A. I thought you would come to your *carnal reasoning.* What has *faith* to do with *reasoning?*

* *F.* Do you ever read the bible? Does not God himself say to sinners, *Come now and let us* reason *together? Isai.* i. 18. Does not our Lord *reason* continually with the Scribes and Pharisees? St. Peter with the *Jews? Acts* ii. 14, *&c.* and St. Paul, both with the *Jews* and *Gentiles?* Nay is not great part of his epistles, both

both to the *Romans* and to the *Galatians*, and the far greateſt part of that to the *Hebrews*, one entire chain of *reaſoning?*

A. You may do what you pleaſe. But I don't *reaſon*, I *believe*.

F. Now, I *believe* and *reaſon* too: for I find no inconſiſtency between them. And I would juſt as ſoon put out my eyes, to ſecure my *faith*, as lay aſide my *reaſon*.

A. But do not men abuſe their reaſon continually? therefore 'tis beſt to have nothing to do with it.

F. So! Now you are doing the very thing you condemn. You are *reaſoning* againſt *reaſoning*. And no wonder; for it is impoſſible, without reaſoning either to prove or diſprove anything.

A. But can you deny the facts? Do not men abuſe their reaſon continually?

F. They do. The fact I deny not. But I deny the inference drawn from it. For if we muſt lay aſide whatever men abuſe continually, we muſt lay aſide the bible; nay, and meat and drink too.

A. Well, but come to the point. In what do you truſt, for juſtification and ſalvation?

F. In the alone merits of Chriſt, which are mine, if I truly *believe*, that he loved *me*, and gave himſelf for *me*.

A. If! So you make ſalvation *conditional!*

F. And do not you? Elſe you make God a liar: for his expreſs words are, *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved, he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* What is this but to ſay, *If* thou believeſt, (there is the *condition*) thou ſhalt be ſaved.

A. But I do not like that word *condition.*

F. Then find a better, and we will lay it aſide.

A. However, I inſiſt upon it, *nothing elſe beſide faith is required* in order to juſtification and ſalvation.

F. What do you mean by *nothing elſe is required?*

A. I mean, *There is but one duty, which is that of* believing. *One muſt* do nothing, *but quietly attend the voice of the* Lord. *The gates of heaven are ſhut upon workers, and open to believers. If we do* nothing *for heaven, we do* as much *as* God *requires. And when the apoſtle* Paul *preſſeth men to believe, it is as much as if he had bid them not to work.*

F. Let Paul be permitted to anſwer for himſelf. In the 26th chapter of the *Acts to the apoſtles*, he relates how our Lord *ſent* him, *to open the eyes of the* Gentiles—*that they might receive remiſſion of ſins.* (Ver. 17, 18.) *Whereupon* (ſaith he) *I was not diſobedient to the heavenly viſion: but ſhewed—to the* Gentiles, *that they ſhould repent and turn to* God, *and* do works *meet for repentance.* Obſerve; he *obeyed the heavenly viſion*, by teaching the *Gentiles*, *before* they were juſtified, before they had *received forgiveneſs of ſins*

ſins, to *repent and do works meet for repentance* So far was he from *bidding them to work*, while he was *preſſing them to believe.*

A. You are got to your *carnal reaſoning* again.

F. Carnal *reaſoning*, I perceive, is a *cant term* which you uſe, when you know not what elſe to ſay. But I have not done with this inſtance yet. Did St. Paul indeed preach to thoſe *Heathens* according to the inſtructions given him from heaven, or did he not?

A. Without doubt he did; otherwiſe he would have been *diſobedient unto the heavenly viſion.*

F. How then ſay you, that a miniſter of Chriſt ought to preach nothing but "Believe, believe?" And, that to tell men of *doing* any thing, is *preaching the law?* Do you not herein condemn not only the great apoſtle, but alſo him that *ſent* and commanded him *thus to preach?*

A. Why, ſurely, you would not have us to be *under the law!*

F. I fear you know not what that expreſſion means. St. Paul uſes it thrice in his epiſtle to the Romans, five times in that to the Galatians, and in one paſſage of his former epiſtle to the Corinthians: where he declares, in what ſenſe he was himſelf *under the law*, and in what ſenſe he was not. *Unto them that are under the law*, (that ſtill adhere to the whole Jewiſh diſpenſation) *I became as under the law*, (I conformed to their ceremonies) *that I might gain them that are under the law: but unto them that are without the law:* (unto the *Gentiles* or *Heathens*) *as without the law:*

being, mean time, *not without law to* God, *but under the law to* Chriſt, (1 Cor. ix. 20, 21.) It is plain, therefore, the apoſtle was *under the law of* Chriſt, though he was not *under the law of ceremonies.*

A. But does not St. Paul ſay to the believers at Rome, *Ye are not under the law, but under grace?*

F. He does; and his meaning is, *Ye are not under the* Jewiſh, *but the gracious* Chriſtian diſpenſation: as alſo in the next verſe, where he ſays, *We are not under the law, but under grace.*

A. But what does he mean when he ſays to the Galatians, *Before faith came we were kept under the law?*

F. Doubtleſs he means, *we were kept under* (ch. iii. 19.) the Jewiſh diſpenſation till we believed in Chriſt. And ſo we read in the next chapter, (ver. 4, 5.) *When the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made under the law,* (the Jewiſh diſpenſation) *to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons*; might ſerve God without fear, in righteouſneſs and holineſs, with a free, loving child-like ſpirit.

A. You cannot perſuade me to this; I know better. The *law of works* (the *moral* law, as you call it) is nothing to me. *From any demand, of the law, no man is obliged to go one ſtep, to give away one farthing, to eat, or omit one morſel. For what did our Lord do with the law? He aboliſhed it.*

F. However,

F. However, ought not we, *after* we believe in him, to obey all the commandments of Chriſt?

A. Obey! Law! Works! Commandments! O what *legalneſs is in your ſpirit!* So, I ſuppoſe, *your comforts vaniſh away when you are not aſſured that you obey all Chriſt's commandments!* On the contrary, *a ſpiritual man beholdeth juſtifying grace in believing, without his obedience to commands for external worſhip and good works.*

F. But how does this agree with numberleſs texts of ſcripture? In particular, with thoſe words of our Lord, *Think not that I am come to deſtroy* (or aboliſh) *the law: I am not come to deſtroy but to fulfil. For verily I ſay unto you, till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law.—Whoſoever, therefore, ſha'l break one of theſe leaſt commandments, he ſhall be called the leaſt in the kingdom of heaven,* Matt. v. 17, &c.

A. I tell you plainly, I won't *reaſon.*

F. That is as much as to ſay, "I won't be convinced. I love darkneſs rather than light."

A. No: it is you that are in darkneſs. I *was* ſo, till a few weeks ſince. But now my eyes are opened. I ſee my *liberty* now. Now I am *free.* I was in *bondage* long enough.

F. What are you free from?

A. From ſin and hell, and the devil and the law.

F. You put the law of God in goodly company. But how came you to be *free from the law?*

A. Chriſt *made me free* from it.

F. What! From his own law! Pray, where is that written?

A. Here, Gal. iii. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us.*

F. What is this to the purpoſe? This tells me, that Chriſt *hath redeemed us* (all that believe) *from the curſe*, or puniſhment juſtly due to our paſt tranſgreſſions of God's law. But it ſpeaks not a word of redeeming us *from the law*, any more than from love or heaven. But what do you mean by *bondage?*

A. Why, the being bound to keep the law.

F. You have no tittle of ſcripture for this. Bondage to fear and bondage to ſin are mentioned there; and bondage to the ceremonial law of Moſes: but according to *your* ſenſe of the word, all the angels in heaven are *in bondage.*

A. Well, I am not bound. St. Paul himſelf ſays to believers, *Why are ye ſubject to ordinances*, Col. ii. 20.

F. True: *i. e.* Why are you Chriſtian believers ſubject to Jewiſh ordinances? Such as thoſe which are mentioned in the very next verſe, *Touch not, taſte not, handle not.*

A. I wiſh you would not build ſo much upon the

the *letter:* it is your *letter-learning* too makes you talk of *inherent righteouſneſs*

F. Do you ſay then a believer has no *inherent righteouſneſs?*

A. That I do. I ſay, God *will ſave us to the utmoſt without any righteouſneſs or holineſs of our own.* To look for *inherent righteouſneſs, is to deny the Spirit, and trample under foot the blood of the covenant. Believers have not any inherent righteouſneſs in them. Our righteouſneſs is nothing but the imputation of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt.*

F. Now I believe, that Chriſt by his Spirit works righteouſneſs in all thoſe to whom faith is imputed for righteouſneſs.

A. *By no means; all our righteouſneſs is in Chriſt. It is wholly imputed, not inherent. We are always righteous in Chriſt, but never righteous in ourſelves.*

F. Is not then every believer righteous or holy?

A. Doubtleſs; but he is holy *in Chriſt*, not *in himſelf.*

F. Does he not live a holy life? And is he not holy in heart?

A. Moſt certainly.

F. Is he not, by plain conſequence, holy in *himſelf?*

A. No, no, *in Chriſt only:* not holy *in himſelf:* he has no holineſs at all *in himſelf.*

F. Has he not *in him* the love of God, and

of

of his neighbour? Yea, the whole image of God?

A. He has. But this is not gospel holiness.

F. What vain jangling is this? You cavil at the *name*, while you allow the whole *thing* I contend for. You allow, a believer is holy both in heart and life. This is all I mean by *inherent righteousness or holiness.*

A. But I tell you, this is not gospel-holiness. Gospel-holiness is faith.

F. Stand to this, and you still give up the whole cause. For, on your supposition, I argue thus:

Faith is holiness or righteousness:

But faith is in every believer:

Therefore holiness or righteousness is in every believer.

A. Alas, alas! I pity you. Take my word for it you are in utter darkness. You know nothing yet of true faith; nothing at all about it.

F. Will you then be so kind as to explain it to me?

A. I will. I will make it as clear as the sun. I will shew you the very marrow of that doctrine, which *I recommend, with all my heart to all, as the most wholesome doctrine of Jesus Christ.*

We believe, that the blood shed upon the cross has put away and blotted out all our sins, and that then there was an everlasting righteousness brought in: by believing which our hearts and consciences are made as perfectly clean as though we had never sinned.

ſinned. In this conſiſts true purity of ſoul, and not in habitual qualities. *And whoſo are thus made pure and perfect are delivered from the dominion of ſin. They do alſo bear forth the fruits of righteouſneſs, not in order to become* more *holy, but becauſe they* are *perfectly holy, through faith. It is true, we have ſtill the vile, ſinful body, which continually diſpoſes the mind to evil. But the blood of Jeſus makes us free from ſin.*

F. You ſay, *We believe, that the blood ſhed upon the croſs has put away and blotted out all our ſins.* Why, who believes otherwiſe? If you mean only, that Chriſt then *put away the puniſhment* of all our ſins who believe in him. What a marvellous diſcovery is this? I pray, whom doth this arguing reprove?

A. It reproves you, who deny, that *an everlaſting righteouſneſs was then brought in.*

F. I do not deny it; no more than you underſtand it. But I aſk, in what ſenſe was it *brought in?* What was it *brought into?* Was it *then* firſt brought *into the world?* You cannot ſay this, without ſaying that all who went out of the world before that hour were loſt. Or was it brought *into the ſouls* of believers? Then believers have an *inward* or *inherent* righteouſneſs. You had better therefore let this text alone. It will do no ſervice at all to your cauſe.

A. I ſee plain, you are as *blind* as a beetle ſtill. I am afraid your *head-knowledge* will deſtroy you.

Did

Did not I tell you, *our hearts and conſciences are made perfectly clean by our believing? And that in* this *conſiſts true purity of ſoul*; *and not in* habitual qualities? *Thus we are made perfectly holy.* And though *the vile ſinful body continually diſpoſes the mind to evil,* yet *the blood of Chriſt makes us free from ſin.*

F. How can my *mind* at the ſame time it is *continually diſpoſed to evil,* be *free from ſin, perfectly clean, perfectly holy?*

A. O the dulneſs of ſome men; I do not mean *really* holy, but holy by *imputation.* I told you plainly, the holineſs of which we ſpeak, is not *in us,* but *in Chriſt. The fruits of the Spirit (commonly called ſanctification) ſuch as love, gentleneſs, long-ſuffering, goodneſs, meekneſs, temperance, neither make us holy before God, nor in our own conſciences.*

F. I know theſe cannot *atone* for one ſin. This is done by the blood of Chriſt alone: for the ſake of which God forgives, and works theſe in us by faith. Do I reach your meaning now?

A. No, no. I wonder at your ignorance. I mean, *we are not made good or holy, by any inward qualities or diſpoſitions: but being made pure and holy in our conſciences, by believing in Chriſt, we bear forth inwardly and outwardly the fruits of holineſs.* Now, I hope, you underſtand me.

F. I hope, not. For if I do, you talk as groſs nonſenſe

nonſenſe and contradiction as ever came out of the mouth of man.

A. How ſo?

F. You ſay, *we are not made good or holy by any inward qualities or diſpoſitions!* No! Are we not made good by inward goodneſs? (Obſerve we are not ſpeaking of juſtification but ſanctification.) Holy by inward holineſs? Meek by inward meekneſs? Gentle by inward gentleneſs? And are not all theſe, if they are any thing at all, *inward qualities or diſpoſitions?*

Again, juſt after denying, that we have any inward holineſs, you ſay, *we are made holy in our conſciences, and bear forth inwardly and outwardly the fruits of holineſs.* What heaps of ſelf-contradiction are here?

A. You do not take me right. I mean theſe inward diſpoſitions *are not our holineſs. For we are not more holy, if we have more love to God and man, nor leſs holy, if we have leſs.*

F. No! Does not a believer increaſe in holineſs as he increaſes in the love of God and man?

A. I ſay, no. *The very moment he is juſtified he is wholly ſanctified. And he is neither more nor leſs holy from that hour to the day of his death.*

F. You do well to except againſt *ſcripture* and *reaſon.* For till a man has done with them he can never ſwallow this. I underſtand your doctrine now, far better than I like it. In the main, you are talking much and ſaying nothing: labouring as if you had found out the moſt important truths,

truths, and such as none ever knew before. And what does all this come to at the last? A mere, empty *strife of words*. All that is really uncommon in your doctrine, is a heap of broad absurdities, in most of which you grosly contradict yourselves, as well as scripture and common sense. In the mean time you boast and vapour, as if *ye were the men, and wisdom should die with you.* I pray God to *humble you, and prove you, and shew you what is in your heart!*

[The *End* of the *Preservative.*]

A DIA-

A

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN A

PREDESTINARIAN

And his FRIEND.

Out of thine own mouth!

To all PREDESTINARIANS.

1. I *Am informed ſome of you have ſaid that the following quotations are falſe; that* theſe words were not ſpoken *by theſe authors: others, that they were not ſpoken* in this ſenſe: *and others, that*

that neither you yourself, nor any true Predestinarian *ever* did, *or ever* would speak so.

2. *My friends, the authors here quoted are well known, in whom you may read the words with your own eyes. And you who have read them, know in your own conscience, they were spoken* in this sense, *and no other: nay, that* this sense *of them is professedly defended, throughout the whole treatises whence they are taken.*

3. *But be this as it may, do you indeed say,* No true Predestinarian ever did or would speak so? *Why* every *true Predestinarian must speak so, and so must you yourself too, if you dare* speak out, *unless they and you renounce your fundamental principle.*

4. *Your fundamental principle is this,* God from eternity ordained whatsoever should come to pass. *But from this single position undeniably follows every assertion hereafter mentioned. It remains therefore only that you chuse which you please (for one you must chuse) of these three things; either,* 1. *To equivocate, evade the question, and prevaricate without end; or,* 2. *To swallow all these assertions together, and honestly to avow them; or,* 3. *To renounce them all together, and believe in Christ,* the Saviour of all.

A DIALOGUE, &c.

Friend. SIR, I have heard that you make God the author of all sin, and the destroyer of the greater part of mankind without mercy.

Pred.

Pred. I deny it; I only say, † *God did from all eternity unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.*

Friend. Do you make no exception?

Pred. No surely: for ‡ *Nothing is more absurd than to think any thing at all is done but by the ordination of God.*

Friend. Do you extend this to the actions of men?

Pred. Without doubt: ‖ *Every action and motion of every creature is so governed by the hidden counsel of God, that nothing can come to pass, but what was ordained by him.*

Friend. But what then becomes of the wills of men?

Pred. § *The wills of men are so governed by the will of God, that they are carried on straight to the mark which he has fore-ordained.*

Friend. I suppose you mean the *permissive* will of God?

Pred. No, I mean, ¶ *All things come to pass, by the* efficacious *and* irresistible *will of God.*

Friend. Why then, all men *must* do just what they do.

Pred. True. † *It is impossible that any thing should ever be done, but that to which God impells the will of man.*

Friend.

† Assembly's Catechism, Chap. 3 ‡ Calvin's Institutes, Book I. Chap. 16. Sect. 8. ‖ Ibid. sect. 3. § Ibid sect. 8. ¶ Dr. Twiss. Vindiciæ Gratiæ Potestatis & Providentiæ Dei. Editio Jensoniana. Pars III. p. 19. † Ibid. p. 19.

Friend. But does not this imply the neceſſity of all events?

Pred. ‡ *I will not ſcruple to own that the will of God lays a neceſſity on all things, and that every thing he wills, neceſſarily comes to paſs.*

Friend. Does ſin then neceſſarily come to paſs.

Pred. Undoubtedly. For ‖ *The almighty power of God extends itſelf to the firſt fall, and all other ſins of angels and men.*

Friend. I grant God foreſaw the firſt man would fall.

Pred. Nay, § *God not only foreſaw that* Adam *would fall, but alſo ordained that he ſhould.*

Friend. I know God permitted *Adam*'s fall.

Pred. I tell you, §§ *he fell not only by the permiſſion, but alſo by the appointment of God.* ¶¶ *He ſinned becauſe God ſo ordained,* †† *becauſe the Lord ſaw good.*

Friend. But do not thoſe who differ from you, raiſe many objections againſt you as to this point?

Pred. Yes. ‡‡ *Thoſe poiſonous dogs vomit out many things againſt God.* ‖‖ *They deny that the ſcripture ſays God decreed* Adam's *fall. They ſay he might have choſe either to fall or not: and that God fore-ordained only to treat him according to his deſert.*

‡ Calvin's Inſt. b. 3. c. 24. ſect. 8. ‖ Aſſembly's Catechiſm. c. 5. § Calv. Inſt. b. 3. c. 23. ſect. 7. §§ Calvini Reſponſio ad Calumnias Nebulonis cujuſdam ad Articulum primum. ¶¶†† Calv. Inſt. b 3. c. 24. ſect. 8. ‡‡ Ibid. b. 3. c. 23. ſect. 2. ‖‖ Ibid. ſect 7.

desert. As if God had created the noblest of all his creatures, without fore-ordaining what should become of him!

Friend. Did God then make *Adam* on purpose that he might fall?

Pred. Undoubtedly. † *God made* Adam *and* Eve *to this very purpose, that they might be tempted and led into sin. And by force of his decree, it could not otherwise be but they must sin.*

Friend. But do not you ground God's decree on God's fore-knowledge rather than his will?

Pred. No. ‡ *God foresees nothing but what he has decreed, and his decree precedes his knowledge.*

Friend. Well, this may truly be termed, *A horrible decree.*

Pred. ‖ *I confess it is a horrible decree: yet no one can deny, but God fore-knew* Adam's *fall, and therefore fore-knew it, because he had ordained it so by his own decree.*

Friend. Do you believe then that God has by his own positive decree, not only *elected* some men to life, but also *reprobated* all the rest?

Pred. Most surely if I believe one, I believe the other. § *Many indeed (thinking to excuse God) own election, and yet deny reprobation: but this is quite silly and childish. For without reprobation, election itself cannot stand; whom God passes by, those he reprobates.*

Friend.

† Piscator Disput. Prædest. præf. p. 6. ‡ Piscat. Disput. Prædest. ‖ Calv. Inst. l. 3. c. 23. s. 7. § Calv. Inst. b. 3. c. 23. s. 1.

Friend. Pray explain what you mean by election and reprobation.

Pred. With all my heart. ¶ *All men are not created for the same end; but some are fore-ordained to eternal life; others to eternal damnation. So according as every man was created for the one end or the other, we say he was elected or predestinated to life, or* reprobated, i. e. *predestinated to destruction.*

Friend. Pray repeat your meaning.

Pred. ||| *God hath once for all appointed by an eternal and unchangeable decree, to whom he would give salvation, and whom he would devote to destruction.*

Friend. Did God make any man on purpose that he might be damned?

Pred. Did not I tell you before? † *God's first constitution was, that some should be destined to eternal ruin; and to this end their sins were ordained, and denial of grace in order to their sins.*

Friend. But is not God's predestinating men to life or death grounded on his fore-knowledge?

Pred. ‡ *So the vulgar think; that God as he fore-sees every man will deserve, elects them to life, or devotes them to death and damnation.*

Friend. And do not you think that reprobation, at least, is grounded on God's fore-knowing men's sins?

Pred.

¶ Ibid. c. 21. s. 1. ||| Ibid. s. 7. † Zanchius de natura Dei p. 553, 554. ‡ Calvin. Inst. b. 3. c. 22. s. 1.

Pred. No indeed. ‖ *God of his own good pleaſure ordains that many ſhould be born, who are from the womb devoted to inevitable damnation. If any man pretend that God's fore-knowledge lays them under no neceſſity of being damned, but rather that he decreed their damnation, becauſe he foreknew their wickedneſs; I grant that God's fore-knowledge alone lays no neceſſity on the creature; but eternal life and death depend on the will rather than the fore-knowledge of God. If God only fore-knew all things that relate to all men, and did not decree and order them alſo, then it might be enquired whether or no his fore-knowledge neceſſitates the thing fore-known. But ſeeing he therefore fore-knows all things that will come to paſs, becauſe he has decreed they ſhall come to paſs, it is vain to contend about fore-knowledge, ſince it is plain all things come to paſs by God's poſitive decree.*

Friend. But if God has poſitively decreed to damn the greater part of mankind, why does he call upon them to repent and be ſaved?

Pred. §*As God has his effectual call, whereby he gives the elect the ſalvation to which he ordained them; ſo he has his judgments towards the reprobates, whereby he executes his decree concerning them. As many therefore as he created to live miſerably, and then periſh everlaſtingly: theſe, that they may be brought to the end for which they were created, he ſometimes deprives of the poſſibility of*

‖ Ibid. c. 23. ſ. 6. § Ibid. c. 24. ſ. 12.

hearing the word, and at other times, by the preaching thereof, blinds and ſtupifies them the more.

Friend. How is this? I ſay, if God has created them for never-ending death, why does he call to them to turn and live?

Pred. † *He calls to them, that they may be more deaf; he kindles a light, that they may be the more blind; he brings his doctrine to them, that they may be more ignorant; and applies the remedy to them, that they may not be healed.*

Friend. Enough, enough. Yet you do not make God the author of ſin!

Pred. No certainly. ‡ *God cannot be termed the author of ſin, though he is the cauſe of thoſe actions which are ſins.*

Friend. How is he the cauſe of them then?

Pred. Two ways: firſt, by his eternal, unchangeable decree: ſecondly, by his preſent irreſiſtible power.

Friend. Did God then fore-ordain the ſins of any man?

Pred. ‖ *Both the reprobates and the elect were fore-ordained to ſin, as ſin, that the glory of God might be declared thereby.* § *The reprobates*, more eſpecially, *who were predeſtinated to damnation, and the cauſes of damnation, and created to that end, that they may live wickedly, and be veſſels full of the dregs of ſin.*

Friend.

† Ibid. Inſt. b. 3. c. 24. ſ. 13. ‡ Petri Martyris Vermilli Com. in Roman. p. 413. ‖ Zanchius de nat. Dei, p. 555. § Piſcator contra Tauſſium, p. 47.

Friend. But surely the sins of the elect were not fore-ordained!

Pred. Yes but they were. *For* ¶ *we neither can do more good than we do, nor less evil than we do: because God from eternity has precisely decreed that both the good and the evil should be so done.*

Friend. I understand you, as to God's decreeing sin. But how is his irresistible power *now* concerned in the sins of men?

Pred. ‡ *God is the author of that action, which is sinful, by his irresistible will.*

Friend. How do you mean?

Pred. † *God procures adultery, cursings, lyings.* ‖ *He supplies wicked men with opportunities of sinning, and inclines their hearts thereto. He blinds, deceives and seduces them. He, by his working on their hearts, bends and stirs them up to do evil.* And thus, §§ *Thieves, murderers, and other malefactors are God's instruments, which he uses to execute what he hath decreed in himself.*

Friend. Do you not then charge God himself with sin?

Pred. No. ¶¶ *God necessitates them only to the act of sin, not to the deformity of sin.* Besides, †† *When God makes angels or men sin, he does not*

 sin

¶ Piscatoris Responsio ad amicam duplicationem Conradi Vorstii. p. 176. ‡ Dr. Twiss. Pars III. p. 21. † Piscat. Responsio ad Apologiam. Bertii. ‖ Pet. Martyr. Ver. Comment. in Rom. p 36. 413. §§ Calv. Inst. b. 1. c. 17. s. 5. ¶¶ Twiss Vindiciæ, Pars III. p. 22. †† Zuinglius in Serm. de Provid. c. 5, 6.

ſin himſelf, becauſe he does not break any law. For God is under no law, and therefore cannot ſin.

Pred. ‡ *The devil and wicked men are ſo held in on every ſide with the hand of God, that they cannot conceive, or contrive, or execute any miſchief, any farther than God himſelf doth not permit only, but command. Nor are they only held in fetters, but compelled alſo as with a bridle, to perform obedience to thoſe commands.*

Friend. This is true *Turkiſh* doctrine, and ought ſo to be exploded as that uſed to be in theſe words:

"I do anathematize the blaſphemy of *Mahomed*, which ſaith, that God deceiveth whom he will, and whom he will he leadeth to that which is good. Himſelf doth what he willeth, and is himſelf the cauſe of all good and all evil. Fate and deſtiny govern all things." *Nicetus Saracentia.*

Pred. Nay, our doctrine is more ancient than *Mahomed*. It was maintained by St. *Auguſtine.*

Friend. *Auguſtine* ſpeaks ſometimes for it, and ſometimes againſt it. But all antiquity for the four firſt centuries is againſt you, as is the whole Eaſtern church to this day; and the church of *England*, both in her catechiſm, articles and homilies. And ſo are divers of our moſt holy martyrs, biſhop *Hooper* and biſhop *Latimer* in particular.

Pred.

‡ Calv. Inſt. b. i. c. 17. ſ. 11.

Pred. But does not antiquity say, *Judas* was predestinated to damnation?

Friend. Quite the contrary. St. *Chrysostom*'s express words are, Judas, *my beloved, was at first a child of the kingdom, and heard it said to him with the disciples,* " *ye shall sit on twelve thrones.*" *But afterwards he became a child of hell.*

Pred. However you will own *Esau* was predestinated to destruction.

Friend. Indeed I will not. Some of your own writers believe he was finally saved, which was the general opinion of the ancient fathers. And that scripture, Jacob *have I loved, and* Esau *have I hated,* plainly relates not to their persons but their posterities.

But supposing *Esau* or *Judas* to be damned, what is he damned for?

Pred. Without question for unbelief. For as we are saved by faith alone, so unbelief is the only damning sin.

Friend. By what faith are you saved?

Pred. By faith in Christ, who gave himself for *me.*

Friend. But did he give himself for *Esau* and *Judas?* If not, you say, they are damned, for not believing a lie.

This consideration it was which forced archbishop *Usher* to cry out,

" What would not a man fly unto, rather than yield, that Christ did not die for the reprobates;

and that none but the elect had any kind of title to him; and yet many thousands should be bound in conscience to believe that he died for them, and tied to accept him for their Redeemer and Saviour? Whereby they should have believed that which in itself is most untrue, and laid hold of that in which they had no kind of interest."

Pred. But what then do you mean by the words, *election* and *reprobation?*

Friend. I mean this. 1st. God did decree from the beginning to elect or chuse (in Christ) all that should believe, to salvation. And this decree proceeds from his own goodness, and is not built upon any goodness in the creature. 2dly. God did from the beginning decree to reprobate all, who should obstinately and finally continue in unbelief.

Pred. What then do you think of *absolute, unconditional* election and reprobation?

Friend. I think it cannot be found in holy writ, and that it is a plant which bears dismal fruit. An instance of which we have in *Calvin* himself; who confesses, that he procured the burning to death of *Michael Servetus*, purely for differing from him in opinion in matters of religion.

FREE

FREE GRACE.

A

SERMON

Preached at BRISTOL.

ROM. viii. 32.

He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?

1. HOW freely does God love the world! While we were yet ſinners, *Chriſt died for the ungodly.* While we were *dead in ſin, God ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.* And how *freely with him* does he *give us all things!* Verily free grace is all in all!

2. The grace or love of God, whence cometh our ſalvation, is free in all, and free for all.

* 3. *Firſt.* It is free in all to whom it is given. It does not depend on any power or merit in man: no, not in any degree; neither in whole nor in part. It does not in any wiſe depend either on the good works or righteouſneſs of the receiver: not on any thing he has done, or any thing he is. It does not depend on his endeavours. It does not depend on his good tempers, or good deſires, or good purpoſes and intentions. For all theſe flow from the free grace of God: they are the ſtreams only, not the fountain. They are the fruits of free grace, and not the root. They are not the cauſe, but the the effects of it. Whatſoever good is in man, or done by man, God is the author and doer of it. Thus is his grace free in all, that is, no way depending on any power, or merit in man; but on God alone, who freely gave us his own Son, and *with him freely giveth us all things.*

4. But is it free for all, as well as in all? To this ſome have anſwered, "No: it is free only for thoſe whom God hath ordained to life; and they are but a little flock. The greater part of mankind God hath ordained to death; and it is not free for them. Them God hateth; and therefore before they were born, decreed they ſhould die eternally. And this he abſolutely decreed; becauſe ſo was his good pleaſure; becauſe it was his ſovereign will. Accordingly, they are born for this, to be deſtroyed, body and ſoul, in hell. And they grow up under the irrevocable curſe

of

of God, without any poſſibility of redemption. For what grace God gives, he gives only for this, to increaſe, not prevent, their damnation."

5. This is that decree of predeſtination. But methinks I hear one ſay, "This is not the predeſtination which I hold." I hold only, "The election of grace. What I believe is no more than this, that God, before the foundation of the world, did elect a certain number of men to be juſtified, ſanctified and glorified. Now all theſe will be ſaved, and none elſe. For the reſt of mankind God leaves to themſelves. So they follow the imaginations of their own hearts, which are only evil continually, and waxing worſe and worſe, are at length juſtly puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction."

6. Is this all the predeſtination which you hold? Conſider. Perhaps this is not all. Do not you believe, "God ordained them to this very thing?" If ſo, you believe the whole decree; you hold predeſtination in the full ſenſe, which has been above deſcribed. But it may be you think you do not. Do not you then believe God hardens the hearts of them that periſh? Do not you believe, he (literally) hardened Pharaoh's heart, and that for this end he raiſed him (or created him?) Why this amounts to juſt the ſame thing. If you believe Pharaoh, or any one man upon the earth, was created for this end, to be damned, you hold all that has been ſaid of predeſtination. And there is no need you ſhould

add, that God ſeconds his decree, which is ſuppoſed unchangeable and irreſiſtible, by hardening the hearts of thoſe veſſels of wrath, whom that decree had before fitted for deſtruction.

7. Well, but it may be you do not believe even this. You do not hold any decree of reprobation. You do not think God decrees any man to be damned, nor hardens, irreſiſtibly fits him for damnation. You only ſay, "God eternally decreed, that all being dead in ſin, he would ſay to ſome of the dry bones, *live*, and to others he would not. That conſequently, theſe ſhould be made alive, and thoſe abide in death: theſe ſhould glorify God by their ſalvation, and thoſe by their deſtruction."

* 8. Is not this what you mean by *the election of grace?* If it be, I would aſk one or two queſtions. Are any who are not thus elected, ſaved? Or were any, from the foundation of the world? Is it poſſible any man ſhould be ſaved, unleſs he be thus elected? If you ſay *no*, you are but where you was. You are not got one hair's breadth farther. You ſtill believe, that in conſequence of an unchangeable, irreſiſtible decree of God, the greater part of mankind abide in death, without any poſſibility of redemption; inaſmuch as none can ſave them but God; and he will not ſave them. You believe he hath abſolutely decreed, not to ſave them; and what is this, but decreeing to damn them? It is, in effect, neither more nor leſs: it comes to the ſame thing. For

if

if you are dead, and altogether unable to make yourſelf alive; then if God has abſolutely decreed, he will make only others alive, and not you, he hath abſolutely decreed your everlaſting death; you are abſolutely conſigned to damnation. So then, though you uſe ſofter words than ſome, you mean the ſelf-ſame thing. And God's decree concerning the election of grace, according to your own account of it, amounts to neither more nor leſs, than what others call, "God's decree of reprobation."

* 9. Call it therefore by whatever name you pleaſe, "Election, Preterition, Predeſtination or Reprobation," it comes in the end to the ſame thing. The ſenſe of all is plainly this. "By virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irreſiſtible decree of God, one part of mankind are infallibly ſaved, and the reſt infallibly damned: it being impoſſible, that any of the former ſhould be damned, or that any of the latter ſhould be ſaved."

10. But if this be ſo, then is all preaching vain. It is needleſs to them that are elected. For they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be ſaved. Therefore the end of preaching, "to ſave ſouls," is void with regard to them. And it is uſeleſs to them that are not elected, for they cannot poſſibly be ſaved. They, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be damned. The end of preaching is therefore void with regard to them likewiſe. So that

in either caſe, our preaching is vain, as your hearing is alſo vain.

11. This then is a plain proof, that the doctrine of predeſtination is not a doctrine of God, becauſe it makes void the ordinance of God; and God is not divided againſt himſelf. A ſecond is, that it directly tends to deſtroy that holineſs, which is the end of all the ordinances of God. I do not ſay, "None who hold it are holy." (For God is of tender mercy to thoſe who are unavoidably intangled in errors of any kind.) But that the doctrine itſelf, "That every man is either elected or not elected from eternity, and that the one muſt inevitably be ſaved, and the other inevitably damned," has a manifeſt tendency to deſtroy holineſs in general. * For it wholly takes away thoſe firſt motives to follow after it, ſo frequently propoſed in ſcripture, the hope of future reward and fear of puniſhment, the hope of heaven and fear of hell. That *theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment, and thoſe into life eternal*, is no motive to him to ſtruggle for life, who believes his lot is caſt already: it is not reaſonable for him ſo to do, if he thinks he is unalterably adjudged either to life or death. You will ſay, "But he knows not whether it is life or death." What then? This helps not the matter. For if a ſick man knows, that he muſt unavoidably die, or unavoidably recover, though he knows not which, it is unreaſonable for him to take

any

any phyſic at all. He might juſtly ſay, (and ſo I have heard ſome ſpeak, both in bodily ſickneſs and in ſpiritual) "If I am ordained to life, I ſhall live; if to death, I ſhall die. So I need not trouble myſelf about it." So directly does this doctrine tend to ſhut the very gate of holineſs in general, to hinder unholy men from ever approaching thereto, or ſtriving to enter in thereat.

* 12. As directly does this doctrine tend to deſtroy ſeveral particular branches of holineſs. Such are meekneſs and love; love I mean of our enemies, of the evil and unthankful. I ſay not, that none who hold it have meekneſs and love: (for as is the power of God, ſo is his mercy.) But that it naturally tends to inſpire or increaſe a ſharpneſs or eagerneſs of temper, which is quite contrary to the meekneſs of Chriſt: as then eſpecially appears, when they are oppoſed on this head. And it as naturally inſpires contempt or coldneſs towards thoſe whom we ſuppoſe outcaſts from God. "O, (but you ſay) I ſuppoſe no particular man a reprobate." You mean, you would not, if you could help it. You cannot help ſometimes applying your general doctrine to particular perſons. The enemy of ſouls will apply it for you. You know how often he has done ſo. "But you rejected the thought with abhorrence." True; as ſoon as you could. But how did it ſour and ſharpen your ſpirit in the mean time? You well know it was not the ſpirit of love, which you then felt towards that poor ſinner,

ſinner, whom you ſuppoſed or ſuſpected, whether you would or no, to have been hated of God from eternity.

13. Thirdly, This doctrine tends to deſtroy the comfort of religion, the happineſs of Chriſtianity: this is evident as to all thoſe who believe themſelves to be reprobated, or who only ſuſpect or fear it. All the great and precious promiſes are loſt to them. They afford them no ray of comfort. "For they are not the elect of God. Therefore they have neither lot nor portion in them." This is an effectual bar to their finding any comfort, or happineſs even in that religion, "whoſe *ways* were deſigned to be *ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths peace.*"

14. And as to you who believe yourſelves the elect of God, what is your happineſs? I hope not a notion, a ſpeculative belief; a bare opinion, of any kind; but a feeling poſſeſſion of God in your heart, wrought in you by the Holy Ghoſt; or, *The witneſs of God's Spirit with your ſpirit, that you are a child of God.* This, otherwiſe termed *the full aſſurance of faith*, is the true ground of a Chriſtian's happineſs. And it does indeed imply, a full aſſurance, that all your paſt ſins are forgiven, and that you are *now* a child of God. But it does not neceſſarily imply, a full aſſurance of our future perſeverance. I do not ſay, this is never joined to it: but that it is not neceſſarily implied therein; for many have the one, who have not the other.

15. Now

15. Now this witneſs of the Spirit experience ſhews to be much obſtructed by this doctrine: and not only in thoſe who believing themſelves reprobated, by this belief thruſt it far from them; but even in them that have *taſted of that good gift*, who yet have ſoon loſt it again, and fallen back into doubts, and fears, and darkneſs, *horrible darkneſs that might be felt.* And I. appeal to any of you who hold this doctrine, to ſay between God and your own hearts, whether you have not often a return of doubts and fears concerning your election or perſeverance? If you aſk, who has not? I anſwer very few of thoſe that hold this doctrine. But many, very many of thoſe that hold it not, in all parts of the earth: many of thoſe who know and feel, they are in Chriſt to-day, and *take no thought for the morrow:* who *abide in him* by faith from hour to hour, or rather from moment to moment. Many of theſe have enjoyed the uninterrupted witneſs of his Spirit, the continual light of his countenance, from the moment wherein they firſt believed, for many months or years to this day.

16. That aſſurance of faith which theſe enjoy, excludes all doubt and fear. It excludes all kind of doubt and fear, concerning their future perſeverance: though it is not properly (as was ſaid before) an aſſurance of what is future; but only of what now is. And this needs not for its ſupport, a ſpeculative belief, that whoever is once ordained

ordained to life, muſt live. For it is wrought from hour to hour, by the mighty power of God *by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto them.* And therefore that doctrine is not of God, becauſe it tends to obſtruct, if not deſtroy, this great work of the Holy Ghoſt, whence flows the chief comfort of religion, the happineſs of Chriſtianity.

* 17. Again, how uncomfortable a thought is this, that thouſands and millions of men, without any preceding offence or fault of theirs, were unchangeably doomed to everlaſting burnings? How peculiarly uncomfortable muſt it be, to thoſe who have put on Chriſt! To thoſe who being filled with *bowels of mercy, tenderneſs and compaſſion,* could even *wiſh themſelves accurſt for their brethren's ſake.*

* 18. Fourthly, This uncomfortable doctrine directly tends to deſtroy our zeal for good works. And this it does firſt, as it naturally tends (according to what was obſerved before) to deſtroy our love to the greater part of mankind, namely the evil and unthankful. For whatever leſſens our love muſt ſo far leſſen our deſire to do them good. This it does ſecondly, as it cuts off one of the ſtrongeſt motives to all acts of bodily mercy, ſuch as feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, and the like, viz. The hope of ſaving their ſouls from death. For what avails it to relieve their temporal wants, who are juſt dropping into eternal fire? "Well; but run

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and ſnatch them as brands out of the fire." Nay this you ſuppoſe impoſſible. They were appointed thereunto you ſay from eternity, before they had done either good or evil. You believe it is the will of God they ſhould die. And *who hath reſiſted his will?* But you ſay, "you do not know, whether theſe are elected or not," What then? If you know they are one or the other, that they are either elected or not elected, all your labour is void and vain. In either caſe your advice, repoof or exhortation, is as needleſs and uſeleſs as our preaching. It is needleſs to them that are elected; for they will infallibly be ſaved without it. It is uſeleſs to them that are not elected: for with or without it they will infallibly be damned. Therefore you cannot, conſiſtently with your principles, take any pains about their ſalvation. Conſequently thoſe principles directly tend to deſtroy your zeal for good works: for all good works: but particularly for the greateſt of all, the ſaving of ſouls from death.

19. But, fifthly, This doctrine not only tends to deſtroy Chriſtian holineſs, happineſs, and good works, but hath alſo a direct and manifeſt tendency to overthrow the whole Chriſtian revelation. The point which the wiſeſt of the modern unbelievers moſt induſtriouſly labour to prove is, that the Chriſtian revelation is not neceſſary. They well know could they once ſhew this, the concluſion would be too plain to be denied,

denied, " If it be not neceſſary it is " not true." Now this fundamental point you give up. For ſuppoſing that eternal, unchangeable decree, one part of mankind muſt be ſaved, though the Chriſtian revelation were not in being; and the other part of mankind muſt be damned notwithſtanding that revelation. And what would an Infidel deſire more? You allow him all he aſks. In making the goſpel thus unneceſſary to all ſorts of men, you give up the whole Chriſtian cauſe. *O tell it not in Gath! Publiſh it not in the ſtreets of Aſhkelon! Leſt the daughters of the uncircumciſed rejoice, leſt the* ſons of unbelief *triumph!*

* 20. And as this doctrine manifeſtly and directly tends to overthow the whole Chriſtian revelation, ſo it does the ſame thing, by plain conſequence, in making that revelation contradict itſelf. For it is grounded on ſuch an interpretation of ſome texts (more or fewer it matters not) as flatly contradicts all the other texts, and indeed the whole ſcope and tenor of ſcripture. For inſtance; the aſſertors of this doctrine, interpret that text of ſcripture, " *Jacob have I loved, but Eſau have I hated,*" as implying that God in a literal ſenſe hated *Eſau*, and all the reprobated from eternity. Now what can poſſibly be a more flat contradiction than this, not only to the whole ſcope and tenor of ſcripture, but alſo to all thoſe particular texts, which expreſly declare, " God *is love?*" Again, they infer from that text, *I will have,*

mercy

mercy on whom I will have mercy," (*Rom.* ix. 15.) That God is love only to ſome men, viz. The elect, and that he hath mercy for thoſe only: flatly contrary to which is the whole tenor of ſcripture, as is that expreſs declaration in particular, " *The Lord is loving unto* every *man, and* " *his mercy is over all his works.*" (Pſ. cxlv. 9.) Again, they infer from that and the like texts, " *It is not of him that willeth, neither of him that runeth, but of God that ſheweth mercy,*" that he ſheweth mercy only to thoſe to whom he had reſpect from all eternity. *Nay,* but *who replieth againſt* God now? You now contradict the whole oracles of God, which declare throughout, " God *is no reſpecter of perſons.*" (Acts x. 34.) " *There is no reſpect of perſons with him.*" (Rom. ii. 11.) Again, from that text, " *The children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpoſe of* God *according to election, might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was ſaid unto her,* (unto Rebecca) *The elder ſhall ſerve the younger:*" you infer, that our being predeſtinated or elect no way depends on the fore-knowledge of God: flatly contrary to this are all the ſcriptures; and thoſe in particular, "*elect, according to the fore-knowledge of* God." (1 Pet. i. 2.) " *Whom he did foreknow, he alſo did predeſtinate.*" (Rom. viii. 29.)

21. And, " *The ſame Lord over all is rich in mercy to all that call upon him.* (Rom. x. 12.) But you ſay, No, he is ſuch only to thoſe for whom

whom Chriſt died. And thoſe are not all, but only a few, *whom* God *hath choſen out of the world:* for he died not for all, but only for thoſe *who were choſen in him before the foundation of the world.*" (Eph. i. 2.) Flatly contrary to your interpretation of theſe ſcriptures alſo is the whole tenor of the New Teſtament; as are in particular thoſe texts, "*Deſtroy not him with thy meat, for whom Chriſt died.*" (Rom. xiv. 15.) A clear proof that Chriſt died, not only for thoſe that are ſaved, but alſo for them that periſh. He is, "*the Saviour of the world.*" (John iv. 42.) He is "*the Lamb of* God *that taketh away the ſins of the world.*" (John i. 29.) "*He is the propitiation, not for our ſins only, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world.*" (1 John ii. 2.) "*He (the living* God) *is the Saviour of all men.*" (1 Tim. iv. 10.) "*He gave himſelf a ranſom for all.* (1 Tim. ii. 6.) "*He taſted death for all men.*" (Heb. ii. 9.)

21. If you aſk, "*Why then are not all men ſaved?*" The whole law and the teſtimony anſwer, firſt, not becauſe of any decree of God, not becauſe it is his pleaſure they ſhould die. For, "*as I live, ſaith the Lord* God, *I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth.*" (Ezek. xviii. 32.) Whatever be the cauſe of their periſhing, it cannot be his will, if the oracles of God are true; for they declare, "*He is not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance.*" (2 Pet. iii. 9.) He willeth that all men ſhould

ſhould be ſaved. And they, ſecondly, declare, What is the cauſe why all men are not ſaved; namely, that they will not be ſaved: ſo our Lord expreſly, "*They will not come unto me that they may have life.*" (John v. 40.) "*The power of the Lord is preſent to heal them.*" But they will not be healed. "They *reject the counſel*," the merciful counſel *of* God *againſt themſelves*, as did their ſtiff-necked fore-fathers. And therefore are they without excuſe, becauſe God would ſave them, but they will not be ſaved: this is the condemnation, "*How often would I have gathered you together, and ye would not.*" (Matt. xxiii. 37.)

22. Thus manifeſtly does this doctrine tend to overthrow the whole Chriſtian revelation, by making it contradict itſelf; by giving ſuch an interpretation of ſome texts, as flatly contradicts all the other texts; and indeed the whole ſcope and tenor of ſcripture. An abundant proof that it is not of God: but neither is this all. For, ſeventhly, It is a doctrine full of blaſphemy; of ſuch blaſphemy as I ſhould dread to mention, but that the honour of our gracious God, and the cauſe of his truth, will not ſuffer me to be ſilent. In the cauſe of God then, and from a ſincere concern for the glory of his great name, I will mention a few of the horrible blaſphemies contained in this horrible doctrine. But firſt, I muſt warn every one of you that hears, as ye will anſwer it at the great day,

day, not to charge me (as ſome have done) with blaſpheming, becauſe I mention the blaſphemy of others. And the more you are grieved with them that do thus blaſpheme, ſee that ye *confirm your love towards them* the more, and that your heart's deſire, and continual prayer to God be, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*"

* 23. This premiſed, let it be obſerved, that this doctrine repreſents our bleſſed Lord, Jeſus Chriſt *the righteous, the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth,* as an hypocrite, a deceiver of the people, a man void of common ſincerity. For it cannot be denied, that he every where ſpeaks, *as if he was* willing that all men ſhould be ſaved. Therefore to ſay, *he was not* willing that all men ſhould be ſaved, is to repreſent him as a mere hypocrite and diſſembler. It cannot he denied, that the gracious words which came out of his mouth, are full of invitations to all ſinners. To ſay then, he did not intend to ſave all ſinners, is to repreſent him as a groſs deceiver of the people. You cannot deny, that he ſays, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.* If then you ſay he calls thoſe that cannot come, thoſe whom he knows to be unable to come, thoſe whom he can make able to come but will not, how is it poſſible to deſcribe greater inſincerity? You repreſent him as mocking his helpleſs creatures, by offering what he never intends to give. You deſcribe him as ſaying

ing one thing, and meaning another: as pretending the love which he had not. Him *in whose mouth was no guile*, you make full of deceit, void of common sincerity: then especially, when drawing nigh the city, *He wept over it, and said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee: how often* would I have gathered thy children together—and ye would not." (ἠθέλησα καὶ οὐκ ἠθελήσατε) Now if you say, *They would*, but *he would not*, you represent him, (which who could hear?) as weeping crocodile's tears, weeping over the prey which himself had doomed to destruction.

* 24. Such blasphemy this, as one would think might make the ears of a Christian to tingle. But there is yet more behind; for just as it honours the Son so doth this doctrine honour the Father. It destroys all his attributes at once. It overturns both his justice, mercy, and truth. Yea, it represents the most holy God as worse than the devil, as both more false, more cruel and more unjust. More false: because the devil, liar as he is, hath never said, "*He willeth all men to be saved.*" More unjust, because the devil cannot, if he would, be guilty of such injustice as you ascribe to God, when you say that God condemned millions of souls to everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for continuing in sin, which for want of that grace *he will not* give them, they cannot avoid; and more cruel, because that unhappy spirit *seeketh rest and findeth none*; so that his

his own reſtleſs miſery is a kind of temptation to him to tempt others. But God *reſteth in his high and holy palce:* ſo that to ſuppoſe him of his own mere motion, of his pure will and pleaſure, happy as he is, to doom his creatures whether they will or no to endleſs miſery; is to impute ſuch cruelty to him, as we cannot impute even to the great enemy of God and man. It is to repreſent the moſt high God (he that hath ears to hear, let him hear!) as more cruel, falſe, and unjuſt than the devil.

25. * This is the blaſphemy clearly contained *in the horrible decree* of predeſtination. And here I fix my foot. On this I join iſſue with every aſſerter of it. You repreſent God as worſe than the devil: more falſe, more cruel, more unjuſt. "But you ſay, you will prove it by ſcripture." Hold! What will you prove by ſcripture? That God is worſe than the devil? It cannot be. Whatever that ſcripture proves, it never can prove this. Whatever its true meaning be; this cannot be its true meaning. Do you aſk, "What is its true meaning then?" If I ſay, "I know not," you have gained nothing. For there are many ſcriptures, the true ſenſe whereof neither you nor I ſhall know, till death is ſwallowed up in victory. But this I know, better it were to ſay, it had no ſenſe at all, than to ſay it had ſuch a ſenſe as this. It cannot mean, whatever it mean beſides, that the God of truth is a liar. Let it mean what it will,

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it cannot mean that the Judge of all the world is unjuſt. No ſcripture can mean, that God is not love, or that his mercy is not over all his works: that is, whatever it prove beſide, no ſcripture can prove predeſtination.

* 26. This is the blaſphemy for which, (however I love the perſons who aſſert it) I abhor the doctrine of predeſtination: a doctrine upon the ſuppoſition of which, if one could poſſibly ſuppoſe it for a moment, (call it election, reprobation, or what you pleaſe, for all comes to the ſame thing) one might ſay to our adverſary the devil, "Thou fool, why doſt thou roar about any longer? Thy lying in wait for ſouls is as needleſs and uſeleſs as our preaching. Heareſt thou not, that God hath taken thy work out of thy hands? And that he doth it much more effectually? Thou, with all thy principalities and powers, canſt only ſo aſſault that we may reſiſt thee. But he can irreſiſtibly deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell! Thou canſt only intice. But his unchangeable decree, to leave thouſands of ſouls in death, compels them to continue in ſin, till they drop into everlaſting burnings. Thou tempteſt. He forceth us to be damned. For we cannot reſiſt his will. Thou fool, why goeſt thou about any longer, ſeeking whom thou mayeſt devour? Heareſt thou not, that God is the devouring lion, the deſtroyer of ſouls, the murderer of men? *Moloch* cauſed only children to paſs through the fire; and that fire was ſoon

quenched: or the corruptible body being consumed, its torment was at an end. But God, thou art told, by his eternal decree, fixed before they had done good or evil, causes not only *children of a span long*, but the parents also to pass through the fire of hell: the *fire which never shall be quenched*; and the body which is cast thereinto, being now incorruptible and immortal, will be ever consuming, and never consumed: but *the smoke of their torment*, because it is God's good pleasure, *ascendeth up for ever and ever.*"

* 27. O how would the enemy of God and man rejoice to hear these things were so! How would he cry aloud and spare not! How would he lift up his voice and say, "To your tents, O *Israel!* Flee from the face of this God, or ye shall utterly perish. But whither will ye flee? Into heaven? He is there. Down to hell? He is there also. Ye cannot flee from an omnipresent, almighty tyrant. And whether ye flee or stay, I call heaven his throne, and earth his footstool, to witness against you, ye shall perish, ye shall die eternally. Sing, O hell, and rejoice ye that are under the earth! For God, even the mighty God, hath spoken, and devoted to death thousands of souls, from the rising up of the sun, unto the going down thereof. Here, O death, is thy sting! They shall not, cannot escape. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Here, O grave,

O grave, is thy victory! Nations yet unborn, or ever they have done good or evil, are doomed never to see the light of life, but thou shalt gnaw upon them for ever and ever. Let all those morning-stars sing together, who fell with *Lucifer*, son of the morning. Let all the sons of hell shout for joy! For the decree is past, and who shall disannul it?"

28. Yea, the decree is past. And so it was before the foundation of the world. But what decree? Even this: "*I will set before* the sons of men, *life and death, blessing and cursing*. And the soul that chuseth life shall live, as the soul that chuseth death shall die." This decree, whereby "*whom* God *did foreknow, he did predestinate*," was indeed from everlasting: this, whereby all who suffer Christ to make them alive, are "*Elect, according to the fore-knowledge of* God," now *standeth fast, even as the moon, and as the faithful witnesses in heaven:* and when heaven and earth shall pass away, yet this shall not pass away; for it as unchangeable and eternal, as is the being of God that gave it. This decree yields the strongest encouragement, to abound in all good works, and in all holiness: and it is a well-spring of joy, of happiness also, to our great and endless comfort. This is worthy of God. It is every way consistent with all the perfections of his nature. It gives us the noblest view both of his justice, mercy and truth. To this agrees the whole scope of the Christian revelation, as

well as all the parts thereof. To this *Moſes* and all the prophets bear witneſs, and our bleſſed Lord and all his apoſtles. Thus *Moſes*, in the name of his Lord, " *I call heaven and earth to record againſt you this day, that I have ſet before you life and death, bleſſing and curſing ; therefore chuſe life that thou and thy ſeed may live.*" Thus *Ezekiel* (to cite one prophet for all) " *The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die : the ſon ſhall not bear* (eternally) *the iniquity of the father*, (xviii. 20.) *the righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him, and the wickedneſs of the wicked ſhall be upon him,*" Thus our bleſſed Lord, " *If any man thirſt, let him come to me and drink.*" (John vii. 37.) Thus his great apoſtle St. *Paul*, (Acts xvii. 30.) " God *commandeth all men, every where, to repent.*" " All men, every where :" every man in every place, without any exception, either of place or perſon. Thus St. *James*, " *If any of you lack wiſdom, let him aſk of* God, *who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him.*" (James i. 5.) Thus St. *Peter*, (2 Pet. iii. 9.) " *The Lord is—not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance :*" and thus St. *John*, " *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father,—and he is the propitiation for our ſins : and not for ours only, but for the ſins of the whole world.*" (1 John ii. 1, 2.)

29. O hear ye this, ye that forget God! Ye cannot charge your death upon him. " *Have I*

any

any pleaſure at all, that the wicked ſhould die, ſaith the Lord God? (Ezek. xviii. 23, &c.) *Repent and turn from all your tranſgreſſions: ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruin. Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions, whereby ye have tranſgreſt,—for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael? For I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth, ſaith the Lord* God. *Wherefore turn yourſelves and live ye.*" *As I live, ſaith the Lord* God, *I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked.—Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways: for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael?*" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11, &c.)

UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION.

HEAR, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord,
Father of all mankind,
Spirit of love, eternal Word,
In myſtic union join'd.

Hear, and inſpire my ſtammering tongue,
Exalt my abject thought,
Speak from my mouth a ſacred ſong,
Who ſpak'ſt the world from nought.

Thy darling attribute I praiſe,
Which all alike may prove,
The glory of thy boundleſs grace,
Thy univerſal love.

Mercy I ſing, tranſporting ſound;
The joy of earth and heaven,
Mercy by every ſinner found,
Who takes what God hath given.

Mercy for all thy hands have made,
Immenſe and unconfin'd,
Throughout thy every work diſplay'd,
Embracing all mankind.

Thine eye ſurvey'd the fallen race
When ſunk in ſin they lay,
Their miſery call'd for all thy grace,
But juſtice ſtopp'd the way.

Mercy the fatal bar remov'd,
Thy only Son it gave;——
To ſave a world ſo dearly lov'd,
A ſinful world to ſave.

For every man he taſted death,
He ſuffer'd once for all,
He calls as many ſouls as breathe,
And all may hear the call.

A power to chuſe, a will t'obey,
Freely his grace reſtores;
We all may find the living way,
And call the Saviour ours.

Whom his eternal mind *foreknew*,
That they the power would uſe,
Aſcribe to God the glory due,
And not his grace refuſe;

Them, only them, his will *decreed*,
Them did he *chuſe* alone,
Ordain'd in *Jeſu's* ſteps to tread,
And to be like his Son.

Them, *the elect*, conſenting few,
Who yield to proffer'd love,
Juſtify'd here he *forms anew*,
And *glorifies* above.

For as in Adam all have dy'd,
So all in Chriſt may live,
May (for the world is juſtify'd)
His righteouſneſs receive.

Whoe'er to God for pardon fly,
In Chriſt may be forgiven,
He ſpeaks to all, " Why will ye die,
And not accept my heaven ! "

No ! in the death of him that dies,
(God by his life hath ſworn)
He is not pleas'd ; but ever cries,
Turn, O ye ſinners, turn.

He would that all his truths ſhould own,
His goſpel all embrace,
Be juſtify'd by faith alone,
And freely ſav'd by grace.

* And ſhall I, Lord, confine thy love,
As not to others free ?
And may not every ſinner prove,
The grace that found out me ?

Doubtleſs thro' one eternal now
Thou ever art the ſame,
The univerſal Saviour thou,
And Jeſus is thy name.

Ho! every one that thirſteth come!
Chuſe life; obey the word;
Open your hearts to make him room,
And banquet with your Lord.

* When God invites, ſhall man repel?
Shall man the exception make?
" Come, freely come, whoever will,
And living water take!"

Thou bid'ſt: and would'ſt thou bid us chuſe,
When purpos'd not to ſave?
Command us all a power to uſe,
Thy mercy never gave?

Thou can'ſt not mock the ſons of men,
Invite us to draw nigh,
Offer thy grace to all, and then
Thy grace to moſt deny!

Horror to think that God is hate!
Fury in God can dwell,
God could an helpeſs world create,
To thruſt them into hell!

Doom them an endleſs death to die,
From which they could not flee,
No, Lord! thine inmoſt bowels cry,
Againſt the dire decree!

Believe

Believe who will that human pain
Pleasing to God can prove:
Let *Molock* feast him with the slain,
Our God, we know, is love.

* Lord, if indeed without a bound,
Infinite love thou art,
The horrible decree confound,
Enlarge thy people's heart!

* Ah! Who is as thy servants blind,
So to misjudge their God!
Scatter the darkness of their mind,
And shed thy love abroad.

Give them conceptions worthy thee,
Give them in Jesu's face,
Thy merciful design to see,
Thy all-redeeming grace.

Stir up thy strength, and help us, Lord,
The preachers multiply,
Send forth thy light, and give the word,
And let the shadows fly.

Oh! if thy spirit send forth me,
The meanest of the throng,
I'll sing thy grace divinely free,
And teach mankind the song.

Grace will I sing, thro' Jesus name,
On all mankind bestow'd;
The everlasting truth proclaim,
And seal that truth with blood.

* Come then, thou all-embracing love,
Our frozen bofom warm ;
Dilating fire within us move,
With truth and meekneſs arm.

* Let us triumphantly ride on,
And more than conquerors prove,
Mightily bear the oppoſers down,
And bind with cords of love.

* Shine in our hearts, Father of light,
Jeſu thy beams impart,
Spirit of truth our minds unite,
And keep us one in heart.

Then, only then our eyes ſhall ſee
Thy promis'd kingdom come ;
And every heart by grace ſet free,
Shall make the Saviour room.

* Thee every tongue ſhall then confeſs,
And every knee ſhall bow,
Come quickly, Lord, we wait thy grace,
We long to meet thee now.

Serious CONSIDERATIONS

CONCERNING THE

DOCTRINES

OF

ELECTION and REPROBATION.

Extracted from a late Author.

To the READER.

I Should be glad to see any account of God's dealings with man which might rectify all our errors with convincing evidence, and scatter out darkness like a rising sun. But in the mean time, let us bear with one another, re-

membering it is the prerogative of the great God only, to pierce through all his own infinite ſchemes with an unerring eye, to ſurround them with an all-comprehenſive view, to graſp them all in one ſingle ſurvey, and to ſpread a reconciling light over all their immenſe varieties, man muſt yet grapple with difficulties in this duſky twilight; but God in his time will irradiate the earth more plentifully with his light and truth. Then darkneſs and contentions ſhall fly away for ever! Amen!

Serious CONSIDERATIONS, *&c.*

THAT there is a general ſufficiency of pardon, grace and happineſs provided for all mankind thro' Jeſus Chriſt, which it is left to themſelves to accept or refuſe, may, I think, be proved by the following conſiderations;

I. It is very hard to vindicate the *ſincerity* of the bleſſed God, or his Son in their univerſal offers of grace and ſalvation to men, and their ſending miniſters with ſuch meſſages and invitations to accept of mercy, if there be not ſuch a conditional pardon and ſalvation provided for them.

His

His miniſters indeed, as they know not the event of things, may be ſincere in offering ſalvation to all perſons, according to their general commiſſion, *Go, ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature.* But how can God or Chriſt be ſincere in ſending them with this commiſſion, to offer this grace to all men, if God has never provided ſuch grace for any but the elect, no, not ſo much as conditionally?

'Tis hard to ſuppoſe, that the great God, who is truth itſelf, and faithful in all his dealings, ſhould call upon dying men to truſt in a Saviour for eternal life, when this Saviour has not eternal life intruſted with him to give them if they do as he requires? 'Tis hard to conceive, how the great Governor of the world can be ſincere, in inviting ſinners, who are on the brink of hell to caſt themſelves upon an empty word of invitation, a mere ſhadow and appearance of ſupport, if there be nothing real to bear them up from thoſe deeps of deſtruction, nothing but mere words and empty invitations. Can we think that the righteous and holy God would encourage his miniſters, to call them to lean and reſt the weight of their immortal concerns upon a goſpel, a covenant of grace, a mediator, and his merit; all which are a mere nothing with regard to them, a heap of empty names, an unſupporting void, which cannot uphold them? When our bleſſed Redeemer charges the Jews with aggravated guilt for refuſing his grace, can

we ſuppoſe, he had no grace in his hand to offer them? Or when he, as it were, conſigns them over to death, becauſe (ſays he) *ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life*: can we ſuppoſe, he has no eternal life, not ſo much as a conditional grant of it in his hands for them?

To avoid theſe hard and abſurd conſequences of the *calls of grace and offers of ſalvation, where none is* really *provided*, ſome roundly aſſert, there are *no calls* of grace, *no offers of ſalvation at all in the word of God to any but the elect.* But this runs counter to a great many plain ſcriptures, wherein pardon and ſalvation are propoſed to all ſinners whatſoever, without any regard whether they are choſen of God or not. And it is the deſign and voice of the whole current of ſcripture, to call ſinners to repentance by promiſes of mercy, and to inforce that which *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, (chap. lxv. 6, 7.) *Seek ye the Lord while* he may be found: *Call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

II. It is very hard to defend the ſincerity of the Spirit of God, in awakening the conſciences of thoſe perſons who are not elected, [as appears from this, that they live and die in their ſins] and ſtirring them up to think of receiving the ſalvation of Chriſt upon the terms of the goſpel, if

if there be no such salvation provided for them, to receive upon any terms. It is hard to suppose he should excite the consciences of such sinners in any degree, to any repentings for sin, and bring them near to the kingdom of heaven, in the beginnings of conviction, if there was no pardon provided in any sense for those who are not chosen, whether they repent or no. It is hard to suppose he should give them any, even the weakest excitations, to trust in the merit of a Saviour, if that merit has obtained no salvation for them, not so much as conditional.

* Shall it be ever said, that God the Father, and his Son and Spirit, have done each their parts to encourage and excite non-elect sinners to accept of, and trust in the gospel for salvation, when there is not so much as the least salvation, even in a conditional sense, provided for them to accept of?

III. It is equally difficult to vindicate the *equity* of God, as the *judge* of all men, in condemning unbelievers for not accepting the offers of pardon, if no pardon was provided for them; and in punishing them eternally for not resting on the merit of Christ, and receiving his salvation, if there was no such merit for them to rest upon, nor any such salvation for them to receive. Surely it will appear in that day, that the condemnation of sinners, and their eternal misery, was merely the fruit of their refusing to receive the

the grace of God provided for them, and offered to them, and not of any want of ſufficient proviſion made for them, by him who calls them to receive it. The language of Chriſt, in his miniſtry to ſinners, is, *Come* to the feaſt of the goſpel, *for all things are ready. This is the condemnation*, that when light *came into the world, they loved darkneſs rather than light.* Men are expreſsly condemned, becauſe *they would not come unto Chriſt, that they might have life.* And (as the apoſtle *John* often repreſents) therefore *they die in their ſins.* And ſurely the Lord Jeſus would never be ſent *in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that obey not the goſpel*, if there was no ſufficient proviſion made, whereby they might be enabled to obey it!

* It will render this conſideration much more forcible, when we obſerve, that there is a much ſeverer condemnation to thoſe, who have heard of this goſpel, and not embraced it, in proportion to the light wherein it was ſet before them. It ſhall be *leſs tolerable* for thoſe who refuſed the goſpel that Chriſt preached, *than for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment.* So their having it thus propoſed, makes their caſe much worſe, than if it had never been propoſed to them. And can we think that the righteous Judge of the world will ſend forth words of grace and ſalvation, when there is no real grace or ſalvation in thoſe words, on purpoſe to make his creatures ſo much the more miſerable? It is very hard indeed to vindicate the righteouſneſs

of

of the ſentence, of their double condemnation, for refuſing pardon and ſalvation, if there was not any pardon nor any ſalvation provided for them!

* IV. The word of God, by the general commands, promiſes, and threatnings, given to all men whatſoever, and often repeated therein, repreſents mankind as in a ſtate of trial, and in the way to eternal rewards or puniſhments, according to their behaviour in this life. Now it is very hard to ſuppoſe, all this ſhould be no real and juſt repreſentation, but a mere amuſement: it is hard to ſuppoſe, that all theſe propoſals of mercy, and diſplays of the gracious dealings of God, ſhould be an empty ſhew with regard to all the millions of mankind, beſides the few that are choſen to happineſs. It is hard to ſuppoſe, that they ſhould be ſo fixed in a wretched, hopeleſs, and deplorable ſtate, under the firſt ſin of the firſt man, as to be utterly irrecoverable from the ruins of it: yea, as unalterably loſt, as the very devils are, for whom there was no Saviour provided, and whom God has not treated in this way of precept, promiſe and threatning. Is there not a plain difference made in ſcripture, between *the angels who ſinned, whom God ſpared not, but caſt them down* from heaven, *under chains of darkneſs, until the judgment of the great day*; and mankind *who ſinned*, to whom God giveth time and ſpace for repentance, means of grace, offers

of

of pardon, conditional promiſes of ſalvation, with a command to all men to accept it? What can manifeſt the bleſſed God to be upon terms of mercy with them, if this does not?

V. This ſeems to be a fair and eaſy way, to anſwer thoſe texts of ſcripture, which repreſent God as † *the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of them that believe*; and aſſert, That ‡ God *calls and commands all men every where to repent*: That § *Chriſt taſted death for every man*; That ‖ *he gave himſelf a ranſom for all men, to be teſtified in due time*; That ¶ *he died for all*; That †† *he gave himſelf to be the propitiation for the ſins of the whole world*: That ‡‡ *the Father ſent the Son to be the Saviour of the world*: That §§ *God ſo loved the world, that he ſent his Son, not to condemn the world, but that thro' him the world might be ſaved, and that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*

If we ſuppoſe that there are other texts which aſſert, that there is a ſpecial number whom the Father choſe and gave to the Son, whoſe ſalvation is abſolutely ſecured by the death and interceſſion of Chriſt. But why ſhould this hinder out interpreting the foregoing in a more general ſenſe? Why ſhould we affect to limit that grace of God, which God himſelf expreſſes

† 1 Tim. iv. 10. ‡ Acts xvii. 30. § Heb. iii. 9. ‖ 1 Tim. ii. 6. ¶ 2 Cor. v. 14. †† 1 John ii. 2. ‡‡ Ch. iv. 14. §§ John iii. 16.

preſſes in an unlimited manner? The allowing *the abſolute ſalvation of the elect*, by the righteouſneſs and death of Chriſt on the one hand, and *the conditional ſalvation provided for all mankind*, and offered to them in the goſpel, on the other, thro' the all-ſufficient value of the ſame righteouſneſs and death, is a fair, natural and eaſy way of reconciling theſe different texts of ſcriptures, without any ſtrain or torture put upon any of of them.

Agreeable to this are Mr. Calvin's own words, on *Matt.* xxvi. 5. 8. *This is my blood of the New Teſtament, which was ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins.* "Sub *multorum* nomine non partem mundi tantum deſignat, ſen *totum humanum genus.* Under the name of many, he ſignifies not a part of the world only, but *all mankind.*" And in many other parts of his writings (particularly in his comment on *Rom.* v. 18. 1 *John* ii. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 1.) he clearly expreſſes the ſame ſentiment, viz. That Chriſt *died for all.*

I think it is clear from theſe conſiderations, that thoſe who *are not abſolutely elected to eternal ſalvation*, yet are not predeſtinated to eternal miſery by any *abſolute decree of reprobation.* Nor are they left in the ſtate of fallen angels or devils, for whom no Saviour is appointed. But there is a conditional ſalvation provided for all men, and thro' the merits of Chriſt offered to them in the goſpel.

The

* The doctrine of abſolute reprobation ſtands in ſuch a direct contradiction to all our notions of kindneſs, and love to others, in which the bleſſed God is ſet forth as our example, that we cannot tell how to receive it. Yet if it were never ſo true, and never ſo plainly revealed in ſcripture, it would only be a doctrine which might require our *ſilent ſubmiſſion* to it, with awful reverence of the majeſty of the great God. But it is by no means a doctrine in which we could or ſhould rejoice and glory, or take pleaſure in it, becauſe it has ſo dreadful an aſpect on far the greateſt part of our fellow-creatures. Nor do I think the bleſſed God would require us, ſo far to diveſt ourſelves of humanity, as to take a ſecret ſatisfaction, in the abſolute and eternal appointment of ſuch numbers of our kindred fleſh and blood, to everlaſting perdition. Much leſs ſhould we make this awful and terrible article a matter of our *public boaſt and triumph*, (even if we could prove it to be revealed) but rather *mourn for it.*

And ſince ſo many ſcriptures aſſert, that Chriſt lived and died as a common mediator of mankind, methinks this doctrine of the extenſive goodneſs of God, is a much more deſirable opinion, and ſhould be more chearfully received by us, as it is ſo agreeable to our charity to all men, and ſo neceſſary for vindicating the juſtice, goodneſs, and ſincerity of the bleſſed God, in his tranſactions with mankind.

When

When therefore I hear men talk of the doctrine of *Reprobation*, with a ſpecial guſt and reliſh, as a favourite doctrine, I cannot but ſuſpect their good temper, and doubt, whether they love their neighbour as themſelves. The caſe is very different, when ſaints are ſaid in ſcripture, to rejoice in the public judgments of God, upon the Antichriſtian ſtate, or upon the wicked oppreſſors, and incorrigible ſinners of the world. For that is the effect of God's equity and righteouſneſs, as a wiſe and faithful governor. But this would be an inſtance merely of his dreadful ſovereignty, and hardly conſiſtent with goodneſs.

I would aſk leave alſo to enquire, What great advantages can be derived to religion, by endeavouring to limit the extent of the death of Chriſt, and conſequently to take away all manner of hopes, and endeavours, and prayers, from thoſe who are ſuppoſed not to be elected? Does the goodneſs and *ſpecial grace* of God acquire any honour by this limitation? No certainly. Divine grace is the ſame toward the elect, whether others are ſaved or loſt. Are the elect any way diſcouraged by it? Not in the leaſt. But by the contrary doctrine, many perſons who are awakened to a ſenſe of ſin, and are ſeeking after Chriſt for ſalvation, may be terribly diſcouraged from receiving his offers of grace, when they are taught to doubt whether there be any grace provided for them, and whether Jeſus be appointed to act as *their* Saviour. It may be a means to drive ſome poor ſouls to deſpair, when they hear that unleſs

unleſs they are elected, they may ſeek after ſalvation by Chriſt in vain, for there is none purchaſed for them. And it may tempt them to begin at the wrong end, and ſeek to pry into the counſels of God, before they dare truſt in his grace, or ſubmit to the goſpel of Chriſt.

Now if many inconveniences may ariſe from thus limiting the virtue of the blood of Chriſt, and if no valuable end or advantage to religion can be obtained by this narrow opinion: what ſhould make men ſo zealous to get the greateſt part of the world utterly excluded from all hopes and all ſalvation?

The great objection againſt what I have ſaid is this;

"If there be only an *outward ſufficiency of ſalvation* provided for them who are not elected, or ſalvation on condition that they believe, but no *inward ſufficiency of grace* to change their hearts, and enable them to believe, the event will be the ſame, as if no ſalvation were provided: Since they themſelves cannot believe, being by nature *dead in ſin*."

I anſwer, it is true, no ſinner can believe, but by the almighty power of God. And therefore ſuch are ſaid to be *dead in ſin*; and the neceſſity of a divine power, to raiſe them from this *ſpiritual death*, is held forth in many places of ſcripture. Yet we muſt ſay ſtill, that ſinners are not under ſuch an impoſſibility of believing, as if they were naturally dead. For if they were, there

there would be no manner of need or uſe of any *moral means or motives*, ſuch as commands, promiſes, threatnings, exhortations: Theſe would all be impertinent and abſurd. For they could have no more influence on ſinners, than if we commanded or exhorted a dead body to riſe or move; which commands and exhortations would appear ridiculous and uſeleſs. Since therefore the bleſſed God in his word does uſe theſe *moral means and motives*, to call ſinners to faith and repentance, it is certain, there is *power ſufficient* given them, to hear and obey the call: And that they are not under any *neceſſity of continuing in ſin*, and of being deſtroyed.

With regard to faith, or believing in Chriſt, in particular, our Saviour thus explains his own words. In one place he ſaith, *No man* can *come unto me, except my Father draw him.* And in another place he charges the Jews with this as their fault, *Ye* will *not come unto me, that ye may have life.*

Let this then be conſtantly maintained, that there is not only an *outward ſufficiency of ſalvation* provided through the merits and death of Chriſt, for every one who *repents and believes the goſpel*; but alſo that there is an *inward ſufficiency of power* given by God to every one, to hearken to the calls of God's grace, and by faith to receive that ſalvation. And thus much is ſufficient to maintain the ſincerity of God, in his univerſal offers of ſalvation thro' Chriſt, and his many

many commands to all men every where, to repent and believe the gospel: As well as to vindicate his equity at the great day, in condemning the impenitent and unbeliever. For since there was both an outward and inward sufficiency for their recovery, their death lies at their own door, being wholly owing to their wilful, obstinate rejection of God and Christ, and his salvation.

I have only this to add, If serious Christians are but desirous to come as near each other as they can, if they are but willing to be reconciled to one another, as far as the present darknesses and difficulties will allow: may they not heartily embrace one another notwithstanding some difference in their sentiments? Surely, the desire to do this, will take away a thousand cavils and contentions, and a thousand unchristian reproaches from the lips and pens of those who profess to worship the same God, to believe in the same Saviour, to hope for the operations of the same blessed Spirit, and who desire to ascribe their salvation to the same grace of God, who is blessed for evermore! Amen.

SERIOUS

SERIOUS

CONSIDERATIONS

ON

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION.

Extracted from a late Author.

1. GOD out of his infinite love, who *delighteth not in the death of a ſinner, but that all ſhould live and be ſaved, hath given his only Son, to the end that whoſoever believeth on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. He is the true light, who enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.* And this light would work

out the ſalvation of all, if not reſiſted. Nor is it leſs *univerſal* than inbred ſin, being the purchaſe of his death who *taſted death for every man.* For *as in Adam all died, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.*

2. But ſome are not afraid to aſſert, That " God by an eternal and unchangeable decree hath predeſtinated to eternal damnation the far greater part of mankind, and that abſolutely, without any reſpect to their works, but only for the ſhewing the glory of his juſtice: and that for the bringing this about, he hath appointed theſe miſerable ſouls neceſſarily to walk in their wicked ways, that ſo his juſtice may lay hold on them: and that he juſtly condemns theſe, although he hath withheld from them that grace by which alone they could have laid hold of ſalvation, as having decreed, (without any reſpect to their works) that they ſhall not obey; and that the goſpel, which he publicly invites them to accept, ſhall never prove effectual for their ſalvation, but only ſerve to aggravate their guilt, and occaſion their greater damnation."

3. We may ſafely call this doctrine a novelty, ſeeing in the firſt four hundred years after Chriſt there is no mention made of it by any writer, great or ſmall, in any part of the Chriſtian church. For as it is contrary to the teſtimony of ſcripture, and to the tenor of the goſpel; ſo all the antient writers, teachers and doctors of the church paſs it over with a profound ſilence.

The

The firſt foundations of it were laid in the latter writings of Auguſtine, who in his heat againſt Pelagius, let fall ſome expreſſions, which ſome have unhappily gleaned up for the eſtabliſhing of this error; thereby contradicting many others, and many more and frequent expreſſions of the ſame Auguſtine. It was afterwards taught by Dominicus, a Popiſh frier, and the monks of his order; and at laſt it was unhappily taken up by John Calvin, (otherwiſe a man in divers reſpects to be commended) to the great ſtaining of his reputation, and defamation both of the Proteſtant and of the Chriſtian religion. However, we ſhould not reject it for the ſilence of the antients, if it had any real bottom in the word of God, and if it were not *highly injurious to God himſelf, to Jeſus Chriſt our Mediator and Redeemer, to the power, virtue, nobility and excellency of his bleſſed goſpel, and laſtly to all mankind.*

4. Firſt, *It is highly injurious to God*, becauſe it makes him the author of ſin. I confeſs, the aſſertors of this doctrine deny this conſequence of it: but that is but a mere-illuſion, and is equally ridiculous as if a man ſhould deny that *two* and *two* make *four*. For if God has decreed, that the reprobated ſhall periſh, and if he hath alſo decreed that they ſhould walk in thoſe wicked ways by which they are led to that end; who, I pray, is the firſt author and cauſe thereof but God, who ſo willed and decreed? This is as plain and natural a conſequence as any can poſ-

ſibly be. And therefore although many of the preachers of this doctrine have ſought out various ſtrange, ſtrained, and intricate diſtinctions to avoid it; yet ſome, and that of the moſt eminent among them, have openly acknowledged it. I ſhall inſtance a few among many paſſages. † *I ſay, that by the ordination and will of God Adam fell. God would have man to fall. Man is blinded by the will and commandment of God. We refer the cauſes of hardening us to God. The higheſt or remote cauſe of hardening, is the will of God.* Theſe are Calvin's words. — ‡ *God* (ſaith Beza) *hath predeſtinated whomſoever he ſaw meet, not only unto damnation, but alſo unto the cauſes of it.*

‖ *It is certain* (ſaith Zanchius) *that God is the firſt cauſe of obduration. Reprobates are held ſo faſt under God's almighty decree, that they cannot but ſin and periſh.* — § *God* (ſaith Martyr) *doth incline and force the wills of wicked men into great ſins.* — ¶ *God* (ſaith Zuinglius) *moveth the robber to kill. He killeth, God forcing him thereunto.* — §§ *Reprobate perſons* (ſaith Piſcator) *are abſolutely ordained to this twofold end, to undergo everlaſting puniſhment, and neceſſarily to ſin: and therefore to ſin, that they may be juſtly puniſhed.*

5. If

† Calvin in cap. 3. Gen. Id. 1 Inſt. c. 18. ſ. 1. Id. lib. de præd. &c. ‡ Beza lib. de præd. ‖ Zanch. de excæc. q. 5. Id. lib. 5. de nat. Dei. § Martyr in Rom. ¶ Zuing. lib. de provid. c. 5. §§ Reſp. ad vorſt. par. 1. p. 120.

5. * If these sayings do not import, That God is *the author of sin*, we must not then seek these men's opinions from their words, but some way else. It seems as if they had assumed to themselves that monstrous, two-fold will they feign of God: One by which they *declare* their minds openly; and another more *secret* and *hidden*, which is quite contrary to the other. Nor doth it at all help them to say, that man sins *willingly*; since that *willingness* to sin is (according to their judgment) so necessarily imposed upon him that he cannot but be willing, because God hath willed and decreed him to be so. This shift is just as if I should take a child unable to resist me, and throw it down from a high precipice. The weight of its body indeed makes it go readily down, and the violence of the fall beats out its brains. But though the weight of its body, and not any immediate stroke of my hand, makes the child die; whether is the child or I the proper cause of its death? Let then any man judge, whether they who make God's part as great, and more immediate, in the sins of men, do not make God *the author of sin*, and so are highly injurious to him?

6. Secondly, This doctrine *is injurious to God, because it makes him delight in the death of sinners*, contrary to the express words of God himself. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from*

your evil ways: for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael? Ezek. xxxiii. 11. *This is good and acceptable in the ſight of God our Saviour: who willeth all men to be ſaved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,* 1 Tim. ii. 4. *The Lord is long-ſuffering, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come unto repentance.* But if he hath created men only for this very end, that he might ſhew forth his vengeance upon them (as theſe men affirm) and for effecting this end hath withheld from them that grace whereby alone they could be ſaved from periſhing, yea, and alſo predeſtinated the evil that they might fall into it, certainly he muſt *delight in their death,* contrary to his own expreſs declaration.

7. Thirdly, *This doctrine is highly injurious to Chriſt our Mediator, and to the efficacy and excellency of his goſpel.* For it ſuppoſes his mediation to be neceſſarily of none effect with regard to the ſalvation of the greater part of the world: as if he had not by his ſufferings and death throughly *broken down the middle wall,* nor yet removed the *wrath of God,* or purchaſed the love of God for all mankind: as if it was afore decreed, that it ſhould be of no ſervice to the far greater part of mankind. And it is to no purpoſe to ſay, that his death was of efficacy enough to have ſaved all mankind; if in effect its virtue be not ſo far extended, as to put all mankind into a capacity of ſalvation.

8. Fourthly, *It makes the preaching of the goſpel*

pel a mere mock and illuſion, if many of thoſe to whom it is preached, are by an irrevocable decree ſhut out from being benefited by it. It wholly makes uſeleſs the preaching of faith and repentance, and the whole tenor of the goſpel-promiſes and threatnings. For if ſuch a decree be already paſt, man needs do nothing but wait for *irreſiſtible grace*, which, if he be *elected*, will come, though it be but at his laſt hour: and if he be *reprobated*, will never come, be his diligence and waiting what it can.

9.* Fifthly, This doctrine makes the coming of Chriſt, and his ſacrifice on the croſs, which the ſcripture affirms to have been the fruit of God's love to the world, to have been rather a teſtimony of God's wrath to the world, yea one of the greateſt judgments and fevereſt acts that can be conceived of God's indignation toward mankind: it being only ordained (according to this doctrine) to ſave a very few, and for the hardening and increaſing the damnation of the far greater number of men, namely of all thoſe who do not truly believe: the cauſe of which unbelief again, (as theſe divines, ſo called, above aſſert) is the hidden counſel of God. Certainly then the coming of Chriſt was never to them a teſtimony of God's love, but rather of his implacable wrath: and if the world may be taken for the far greater number of ſuch as live in it, God never loved the world, according to this doctrine, but rather hated it greatly, in ſending his Son to be crucified in it.

10. * Sixthly, *This doctrine is highly injurious to mankind*; for it renders them in a far worſe condition than the devils in hell. For theſe were ſome time in a capacity to have ſtood: they might have kept their happy eſtate, but would not: whereas many millions of men are tormented for ever, according to them, who never were happy, nor ever can be. It renders them worſe than the beaſts of the field, of whom the maſter requires no more than they are able to perform; and if they be killed, death is to them the end of all ſorrow: whereas man is in pain without end, for not doing that which he never was able to do. It puts him into a far worſe condition than Pharaoh put the Iſraelites: for tho' he withheld ſtraw from them, yet they could get it by much labour. But they make God to withhold from men all means of ſalvation, ſo that they cannot attain it by all their pains. Yea, they place mankind in that condition which the poets feign of Tantalus; who oppreſt with thirſt, ſtands in water up to the chin, yet can by no means reach it with his tongue; and being tormented with hunger, hath fruits hanging at his very lips, yet ſo as he can never lay hold of them with his teeth. And theſe things are ſo near him, not to nouriſh him, but to torment him. So do theſe teachers make God deal with mankind. They make the outward creation, the works of providence, the ſmitings of conſcience, ſufficient to convince the reprobates of ſin, but never intended to help them to ſalvation. They

make the preaching of the gospel, and the offer of salvation by Christ, sufficient to condemn them; serving to beget a seeming faith and a vain hope; yet by reason of God's irresistible decree, all these (say they) are wholly ineffectual to bring them the least step towards salvation, and do only contribute to make their condemnation the greater, and their torments the more violent and intolerable.

11. In direct opposition to this we affirm, That *God out of his infinite love, who delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but that all should live and be saved, hath sent his only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in him might be saved.* This doctrine is so evident from the scripture testimony, that there is scarce found any other article of the Christian faith, so frequently so plainly, and so positively asserted. It is that which maketh the preaching of Christ to be indeed the gospel, or *glad tidings to all*; as the angel declared his coming to be, (Luke ii. 10.) *Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.* Whereas if this coming of Christ hath not brought a possibility of salvation *to all*, it should rather have been accounted *bad tidings of great sorrow to most people.* Neither would the angel have had reason to sing, *Peace on earth and good will towards men*, if the greatest part of mankind had been necessarily shut out from receiving any benefit from it. And indeed if so, how should Christ have sent out his servants to *preach the gospel to every creature?* That

is, To every ſon and daughter of mankind: for here is no exception. He commands them to *preach ſalvation to all, repentance and remiſſion of ſins to all, warning every one and exhorting every one*, as Paul did Col. i. 28. But how could they have preached the goſpel to *every man*, as became the miniſters of Chriſt, *in much aſſurance*, if ſalvation by that goſpel had not been poſſible to all? What if ſome of theſe had aſked them, *Hath Chriſt died for me?* Should they have anſwered conditionally, *If thou repent, Chriſt died for thee?* The ſame queſtion would have recurred, *Hath Chriſt died for me that I may repent? Otherwiſe my repentance is impoſſible.* To this nothing could be anſwered but the ſame thing over again. Whereas thoſe who *bring the glad tidings of the goſpel of peace*, are to preach the common ſalvation, repentance unto all, offering a door of mercy and hope to all, through Jeſus Chriſt, *who gave himſelf a ranſom for all.* The goſpel invites all. And certainly Chriſt intended not to deceive and delude the greater part of mankind, when he invites and cries, ſaying, *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you reſt.* If *all* then ought to ſeek after him, and to look for ſalvation by him, he muſt needs have made *ſalvation poſſible to all.* For who is bound to ſeek after that which is impoſſible! Certainly it were a mocking of men to bid them to do ſo. And ſuch as deny, that by the death of Chriſt *ſalvation*

tion is made poſſible to all men, do moſt blaſphemouſly make God mock the world, in giving his ſervants a commiſſion *to preach the goſpel of ſalvation unto* all, while he hath before decreed, that it ſhall not be poſſible for them to receive it. Do not they make the Lord to ſend forth his ſervants *with a lie in their mouths*, commanding them to bid *all* and *every one* believe, that Chriſt died for them, and had purchaſed ſalvation for them: whereas (according to this doctrine) he hath done no ſuch thing, or ever intended it? Seeing then Chriſt hath commanded to preach *repentance and remiſſion of ſins to all*, it is certain that he died for all: And that it is poſſible for all to repent and believe. In as much as he, who commiſſioned his ſervants thus to preach, is a God of truth and no mocker of poor mankind, neither doth he require of any man, that which it is ſimply impoſſible for him to do.

12. Moroever, if we regard the teſtimony of the ſcripture, there is not, that I know of, one ſcripture which affirms, Chriſt did not die for all, whereas there are divers ſcriptures which poſitively and expreſly affirm, *he did.* As 1 Tim. ii. 1, 3, 4, 6. *I exhort therefore, that firſt of all ſupplications, prayers, interceſſions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, &c. For this is good and acceptable in the ſight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth—Who gave himſelf a ranſom for all, to be teſtified in due time.* Except we make the apoſtle

to assert quite another thing than he meant, there can be nothing more plain than this. For first he here directs them *to pray for all men*: and to prevent such an objection as this, *Christ prayed not for the world, neither willeth he us to pray for all: Because he willeth not that all should be saved, but hath ordained many to be damned*, he adds, *This is good and acceptable with God, who willeth all men to be saved*. I desire to know what can be more expressly affirmed? Or, can any two propositions be stated in terms more contradictory, than these two,

God willeth not some men to be saved, and
God willeth all men to be saved?

If we believe the last, as the apostle hath affirmed, the first cannot be true. Whence (to conclude) he gives us a reason of Christ's willingness that all men should be saved, in these words, *Who gave himself a ransom for all*. As if he had said, since he gave himself a ransom for all, it is plain he willeth all men to be saved.

13. The same thing is positively affirmed, Heb. ii. 9. *We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man*. He that will but open his eyes, may see this truth here asserted. If *he tasted death for every man*, then certainly there is no man for whom he did not taste death; and then there is no man who may not be made a sharer of the benefit of it.

14. Again

14. Again, our Lord himſelf ſays, *he came not to condemn the world, but that the world thro' him might be ſaved, John* iii. 17. And *John* xii. 47. *he came not to judge the world, but to ſave the world*; whereas according to that doctrine, he did come rather to condemn the world, and not that it might be ſaved by him. For if he did not come to bring ſalvation to the greater part of mankind, but to increaſe their condemnation, it neceſſarily follows, that he did not come with an intention to ſave but to judge and condemn the greater part of the world, contrary to his expreſs teſtimony.

15. Yet again, as the apoſtle Paul aſſerts, That God *willeth the ſalvation of all*, ſo doth the apoſtle Peter aſſert, That he *willeth not the periſhing of any*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. The Lord *is not ſlack concerning his promiſe, as ſome men count ſlackneſs: but is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance.* And this is agreeable to that of the prophet, Ezekiel xxxiii. 11. *As I live ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* Now if it be ſafe to believe God, we muſt not think that he intends to cheat us by all theſe expreſſions, but that he is in good earneſt. And if his will take not effect, the blame is on our parts; which could not be if Chriſt had never died for us, but left us under an impoſſibility of ſalvation. What mean all thoſe

earneſt

earneſt invitations, all thoſe regretting expoſtulations the ſcripture is full of? As, *Why will ye die, O houſe of Iſreal? They will not come unto me that they might have life. I have waited to be gracious unto you. How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not?* Are men who are ſo invited under no capacity of being ſaved? Is ſalvation impoſſible to them. Will you then ſuppoſe God in this, to be only like the author of a romance, or maſter of a comedy, who amuſes and raiſes the various affections and paſſions of the ſpectators: ſometimes leading them into hope and ſometimes into deſpair: all this being in effect, but a mere illuſion, while he hath appointed what the concluſion of all ſhall be?

16. Farther yet: This doctrine is abundantly confirmed by that of the apoſtle, 1 *John* ii. 1, 2. *If any man ſin we have an advocate with the Father*, Jeſus Chriſt *the righteous*; *and he is the propitiation for our ſins*; *and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world.* The way which our adverſaries take to evade this teſtimony, is moſt fooliſh and ridiculous. *The world here*, ſay they, *is the world of believers*; for which we have nothing but their own aſſertion. For firſt, let them ſhew me if they can, in all the ſcripture, where *the whole world* is taken for believers only. I ſhall ſhew them where it is many times, taken for the quite contrary as, *The world knoweth me not: the world receiveth me not: I am not of this world.* Beſides all theſe ſcriptures,

Pſalm

Pſalm xvii. 14. Iſai. xiii. 11. Math. xviii. 7. John vii. 7. and viii. 26. and xii. 19. and xiv. 17. and xv. 18, 19. and xvii. 14. and xviii. 20. 1 Cor. i. 21. and ii. 12. and vi. 2. Gal. vi. 14. James i. 27. 2 Peter ii. 20. 1 John ii. 15. and iii. 1. and iv. 4, 5. and many more. Secondly, The apoſtle in this very place contradiſtinguiſhes the world from the *ſaints thus, and not for ours only, but for the ſins of the whole world.* What means the apoſtle by ours here? Is not that the ſins of believers? Was not he one of thoſe believers? And was not this an univerſal epiſtle, written to all the ſaints that then were? So that according to theſe men's comment, there would be a very unneceſſary and fooliſh redundancy in the apoſtle's words, as if he had ſaid, *he is a propitiation not only for the ſins of all believers, but alſo for the ſins of all believers.* Is not this to make the apoſtle's words nonſenſe? Let them ſhew us, where ever there is ſuch a manner of ſpeaking in all the ſcripture: where any of the penmen firſt name the *believers* together with themſelves, and then contradiſtinguiſhes them from ſome other *whole world of believers.*

17. But we need no better interpreter for the apoſtle than himſelf, who uſes the very ſame expreſſion in the ſame epiſtle, c. v. 19. Saying, *We know* that we *are of God and* the whole world *lieth in wickedneſs.* There cannot be found in all the ſcripture, two places which better anſwer one another: ſeeing in both, the ſame apoſtle, in the ſame

fame epiſtle, to the ſame perſons, contradiſtinguiſhes *himſelf and the ſaints to whom he writes* from *the whole world*; which yet according to theſe men's comments ought to be underſtood of *believers*; as if St John had ſaid, *We know particular believers are of God, but the whole world of believers lieth in wickedneſs.* What abſurd wreſting of ſcripture were this? And yet it may be as well pleaded for as the other. Seeing then the apoſtle tells us plainly, that Chriſt died not only for the church of God to whom he wrote, but alſo *for the whole world*, let us hold faſt this truth, which we have received not of men but of God.

18. But in order to make it yet more plain, we ſhall ſhew theſe two things;

Firſt, *That God hath given to every man born into the world, a time or day of viſitation, during which they may be ſaved.*

Secondly, *That for this end, he hath given to every man, a meaſure of light and grace, which if it is not reſiſted, will work the ſalvation of all; but if it is, will become their condemnation.*

19. Now according to this doctrine, *the mercy of God is excellently well ſet forth*, in that none are neceſſarily ſhut out from ſalvation; and his *juſtice*, in that he condemns none but ſuch as might have been ſaved and would not.

This doctrine *agrees with the whole tenor of the goſpel*, wherein repentance and remiſſion of ſins are commanded to be preached to every creature.

It

It *magnifies the merits and death of Chriſt*, in that it not only accounts them ſufficient to ſave all, but declares them to be brought ſo nigh to all, that they are thereby put into a capacity of ſalvation.

It *exalts above all the grace of God*, to which it attributes all good, aſcribing thereto not only the firſt motions of good, but alſo the whole converſion and ſalvation of the ſoul.

As *it makes the whole ſalvation of man to depend upon God, ſo it makes his condemnation to be wholly of himſelf*, in that he reſiſted the grace of God, and when he might have been ſaved, would not.

It *takes away all ground of deſpair*, in that it gives every man cauſe to hope for ſalvation, *nor yet doth it feed any one in ſecurity*, in that none know how ſoon their day may expire: and therefore, it is a compleat incitement and lively encouragement to every man, if he forſake evil and cloſe with that which is good.

Laſtly, *It is really and in effect*, tho' not in ſo many words, *confirmed and eſtabliſhed by all the preachers of the Chriſtian religion, that ever were or now are*, even by thoſe who otherwiſe oppoſe this doctrine: in that they all, whatſoever place they come to, do preach to the people, and to every individual among them, that they may be ſaved, intreating them to believe in Chriſt, who hath died for them. So that what they deny in the general, they acknowledge

ledge of every particular; there being no man to whom they do not preach, in order to salvation, telling him Jesus Christ *calls and wills him to believe and be saved:* and that if he refuse he shall therefore be condemned, and his condemnation is of himself. Such is the power of truth, that it constrains its adversaries, even against their wills to plead for it.

* 20. We do not indeed by *this day of visitation* understand the whole time of a man's life; tho' in some it may be extended to the very hour of death: but *such a season* at least, *as sufficiently clears God of every man's condemnation*, which to some may be sooner, and to others later, according as the Lord in his wisdom sees meet. So that many men may outlive this day, after which God *suffers* them to be *hardened*, as a just punishment of their wilful unbelief, and even *raises them up* as instruments of wrath, and makes them a scourge one against another. To men in this condition may be fitly applied those scriptures which are abused to prove, that God constrains man to sin. This is plainly expressed by the apostle, Rom. i. from v. 17. to the end; but especially v. 28. *Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.* And that many outlive the day of their visitation, appears by Christ's weeping over Jerusalem, Luke xix. 42. saying, *If thou hadst*

hadſt known in this thy day the things that belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thy eyes: this plainly imports a time when they might have known them, which now was removed from them.

21. But though we affirm there is a time given to all, wherein they *may* be ſaved, yet we deny not ſuch grace may be given to ſome, that they *muſt* be ſaved. There may be ſome in whom the grace of God ſo worketh, that they *cannot reſiſt it.* But there are none in whom it doth not work, ſo that they might be ſaved, if they did not wilfully reject ſalvation.

22. By theſe poſitions, two great objections are eaſily ſolved. The firſt is brought from thoſe places of ſcripture, wherein God ſeems to have predeſtinated ſome to ſalvation. We do not deny it: ſo here is no difficulty at all. The ſecond is drawn from thoſe places, wherein God ſeems to have predeſtinated ſome to deſtruction; becauſe he is ſaid, *To harden their hearts*, and to have *raiſed them up, that they might cauſe his power to be known.* But if they be numbered among thoſe men, whoſe day of viſitation is over, this objection alſo is at an end.

23. We come now more directly to ſhew, *That God hath given to every man a day, or time of viſitation, wherein it is poſſible for him to be ſaved.* Now if we prove, that there is a time or day given, in which thoſe might have been ſaved, who actually periſh, the matter is done. (For none

none deny that thoſe who are ſaved have a day of viſitation) And this appears by the complaints the Spirit of God, throughout the whole ſcripture, makes, even to thoſe that did periſh, challenging them for not accepting God's viſitation and offered mercy. Thus the Lord expreſſes himſelf firſt of all to Cain, Gen. iv. 6, 7. *And the Lord ſaid unto Cain, why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted? If thou doſt not well, ſin lieth at the door.* This was ſaid to Cain, before he ſlew his brother. We ſee how God gave him warning; and offered, in the day of his viſitation, acceptance if he did well. For thoſe words, *Shalt thou not be accepted?* Muſt import, *Thou ſhalt be accepted, if thou doſt well.* So that if we may truſt God, the fountain of all truth, there was a day in which it was poſſible, even for Cain to be accepted. The Lord himſelf alſo ſhews, that he gave a day of viſitation to *the old world*, Gen. vi. 3. *And the Lord ſaid, my Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man:* manifeſtly implying, that his Spirit did ſtrive with him for a ſeaſon, which ſeaſon expiring, God ceaſed to ſtrive with him in order to his ſalvation. From this day of viſitation which God hath given to man, it is, that he is ſaid to *wait to be gracious*, Iſai. xxx. 6. Num. xiv. 18. And to be *long-ſuffering*, Exod. xxxiv. 18. Pſal. lxxxvi. 15. and Jer. xv. 15. where the prophet in his prayer, lays hold on the *long-ſuffering of God*; and in his expoſtulating with God,

God, he ſhuts out the objection of our adverſaries in the 18th verſe, *Why is my pain perpetual and my wound incurable, which refuſeth to be healed? Wilt thou altogether be unto me as a liar and as waters that fail?* Whereas, according to our adverſaries opinion, *the pain* of the moſt part of men is *perpetual*, and *their wound altogether incurable.* Yea the offer of ſalvation unto them is *as a lie and waters* that *fail*, being never intended to be of any effect unto them. The apoſtle Peter ſays expreſsly, that this *long-ſuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, for thoſe of the old world*; anſwerable to Gen. vi. 3. And that none may object that this *long-ſuffering* or *ſtriving of the Lord* was not in order to their ſalvation, the ſame apoſtle ſaith as expreſsly (2 Pet. iii. 15.) That *the long-ſuffering of God is to be accounted ſalvation:* and with this *long-ſuffering*, a little before he couples, that *he is not willing any ſhould periſh.* Where taking him for his own interpreter, as is moſt fit, he teaches, that thoſe to whom the Lord is *long-ſuffering* (which he declareth he was to the old world, and is now to all, *not willing that any ſhould periſh*) they are to *account this long-ſuffering of God to them ſalvation.* But how can they account it ſalvation, if there be not ſo much as a poſſibility of ſalvation conveyed to them therein?

24. St. Peter, further refers to the writings of Paul, ſhewing this to have been the univerſal doctrine. Where it is obſervable he adds, *In which*

which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction: intimating plainly these expressions in Paul's epistles, as Rom. ix. &c. which some unlearned in spiritual things *wrested* so as to contradict *God's long-suffering towards all, not willing that any of them should perish but, that all should come to the saving knowledge of his truth.* Would to God many had taken more heed than they have to this advertisement!

25. That place of the apostle Paul which Peter seems here more particularly to hint at, doth much contribute also to clear the matter, Rom. ii. 4. *Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* St. Paul speaks here to the unregenerate and wicked, who (in the following verse he saith) *treasure up wrath unto the day of wrath.* And to such he commends *the riches of the forbearance and long-suffering of God*, shewing that its tending, is to lead them to repentance. But how could it have this tendency, to lead them to repentance? Or how could it be called *riches of goodness* to them, if there was not a time wherein they might repent by it, and come to be sharers of the *riches* thereof?

26. The sum is this: if God plead with the wicked, from the possibility of their being accepted; if God's Spirit strive with them for a season,

ſeaſon, in order to ſave them who afterwards periſh; if he wait to be gracious unto them; if he be long-ſuffering towards them; if during the time of this long-ſuffering God willeth them not to periſh, but by the riches of his goodneſs and forbearance leadeth them to repentance; then there was a day of viſitation, even to thoſe who have periſhed, wherein they might have been ſaved.

27. Secondly, This appears from Iſaiah v. 4. *What could I have done more to my vineyard?* For in verſe 2, he ſaith, *He had fenced it and gathered out the ſtones thereof, and planted it with the choiceſt vines. And yet* (ſaith he) *when I looked it ſhould have brought forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes.* Wherefore he calleth the men of Judah to be judges between him and his vineyard, ſaying, *What could I have done more to my vineyard than I have done in it? And yet* (as is ſaid) *it brought forth wild grapes:* which was applied to thoſe in Iſrael, who refuſed God's mercy. The ſame ſimilitude is uſed by Chriſt, Matt. xxi. 33. Mark xii. 1. and Luke xx. 9. where Jeſus ſhews, how to ſome *a vineyard was planted*, and all things given neceſſary for them, to get them to render fruit to their maſter, and how the maſter many times waited to be merciful to them, in ſending ſervants after ſervants, and paſſing by many offences, before he determined to deſtroy and caſt them out. Now this

cannot

cannot be underſtood of the ſaints, or of ſuch as repent and are ſaved: for it is ſaid expreſsly, *He will deſtroy them.* Neither would the parable any way anſwer the end for which it is brought, if theſe men had not been in a capacity to have done good. Yea ſuch was their capacity, that Chriſt ſaith in the prophet, what could I have done more? So that it is manifeſt, by this parable, repeated by three Evangeliſts, that Chriſt declares his long-ſuffering towards thoſe men, who when means of ſalvation were afforded to them, did nevertheleſs reſiſt and would not be ſaved.

28. Laſtly, That there is a day of viſitation given even to the wicked, wherein they may be ſaved, and which being expired they are then ſhut out from ſalvation, appears evidently by Chriſt's lamentation over Jeruſalem, expreſt in three ſundry places, Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke xiii. 34. and xix. 41, 42. *And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, ſaying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes*; than which nothing can be more plain. For firſt, he here ſhews, that there was a day wherein the inhabitants of Jeruſalem might *have known thoſe things that belonged to their peace*; Secondly, that during that day he was willing to have *gathered them even as a hen gathereth her young*: Thirdly, that becauſe they refuſed *the things belonging to their peace*, they were

were at length *hid from their eyes.* Why were they hid? Becauſe ye would not ſuffer me to *gather you*: ye would not ſee thoſe things that were good for you, in the ſeaſon of God's love towards you: and therefore *now*, that day being expired, *ye cannot ſee them.* And for a farther judgment, God ſuffers you to be hardened in unbelief.

29. So it is after they have rejected the offer of mercy, and ſalvation, and not before, that God hardens mens hearts. And thus *To him that hath ſhall be given; and from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away, even that which he hath: he hath not*; becauſe he hath loſt the ſeaſon of uſing it, and ſo to him it is now as nothing. For Chriſt uſes this expreſſion, Matt. xxv. 26. on occaſion of the taking *the one talent* from the ſlothful ſervant: which talent was no way inſufficient of itſelf, but of the ſame nature with thoſe given to the others. And therefore the Lord had reaſon to exact the profit of it, proportionably, as of the reſt. So (I ſay) it is after rejecting the day of viſitation, that the judgment of obduration is inflicted on men: as Chriſt pronounces it on the Jews, out of Iſaiah vi. 9. which all the four Evangeliſts mention. Matt. xiii. 14. Mark iv. 12. Luke viii. 10. John xii. 40. And laſt of all, St. Paul, after he had offered ſalvation to the Jews at Rome, pronounces the ſame, Acts xxviii. 26. *Well ſpake the Holy Ghoſt by Iſaiah the prophet unto our fathers, ſaying,*

ing, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted and I should heal them. So it appears, that God would have had them to see, but *they closed their eyes*; and therefore they were justly hardened.

30. What now remains to be proved is, *That God hath given to every man during the day of his visitation, a measure of saving, sufficient light and grace.* And this I shall prove, through God's assistance, by plain and clear testimonies of scripture.

31. First, that of St. John i. 9. *That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* He hath said before, *The life that is in him is the light of men*, and, *the light shineth in the darkness*: and to this he adds, *He is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*

32. From whence we may in short observe, that the apostle calls Christ *the light of men.* And as he is the light, *if we walk with him in the light* which he communicates to us, we come to *have fellowship* and communion *with him*, as the same apostle saith elsewhere, 1 John i. 7. Secondly,

That

That *this light ſhineth in the darkneſs, though the darkneſs comprehend it not.* Thirdly, That *this true light lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* Here the apoſtle carefully avoids their captiouſneſs, who would reſtrain this to a certain number; for where every one is, there is none excluded. And ſhould they ſay, that this *every man* is only *every one of the elect*, the following words *every man that cometh into the world* would plainly refute them. So that it is clear, there comes no man into the world, whom Chriſt hath not *enlightened* in ſome meaſure, and in whoſe dark heart the light hath not ſhined. *Tho' the darkneſs comprehend it not*, yet it *ſhineth* there, and the nature thereof, is to diſpel the darkneſs, where men ſhut not their eyes upon it.

33. And for what end this light is given, is expreſt in verſe 7. where John is ſaid to come for *a witneſs to bear witneſs to the light, that all men through it* (δι αὐτοῦ) *might believe.* Our tranſlators indeed (to ſuit their doctrine) have turned the words *through him*, as if all men were to believe through John. For which as there is nothing in the text, ſo it is contrary to the whole ſtrain of the context. For ſeeing Chriſt hath lighted every man with this light, is it not, that they may come to believe *through it?* John ſhined not in the darkneſs, but this light *ſhineth in the darkneſs*, that having diſpelled the darkneſs, it may beget faith.

34. Seeing then this light is the light of Jesus Christ, and the light through which men come to believe, it needs not to be doubted, but that it is a supernatural, saving and sufficient light. It cannot be any of the natural faculties of our soul, because it is said to shine in the darkness, which darkness is no other than the natural state of man. And that this is sufficient and saving, I prove thus:

That which is given that all men through it may believe; that by walking in which we have fellowship with God, must be sufficient to salvation: but such is *this light*. Therefore it is sufficient for salvation.

Again, That which we are commanded to *believe in, that we may become the children of the light*, must be a supernatural, sufficient, and saving principle: But we are commanded so to *believe in this light*. Therefore, it is a supernatural, sufficient, and saving principle.

The first proposition cannot be denied: the second is Christ's own words, John xii. 36. *While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light.*

35. If it be said, That by *light* here is meant Christ's outward person, this is sufficiently answered by the words themselves, and by the verse going before, *Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you*; plainly importing, that when that light in which they were to believe was removed, they should lose the capacity or season

ſeaſon of believing. Now this could not be underſtood of Chriſt's perſon; for many did ſavingly believe in him (as we do at this day) when his outward perſon was far removed from them. So that this light in which they were commanded to believe, muſt be that inward light from Chriſt, which ſhines in every man's heart for a ſeaſon, even during the day of his viſitation: while this continueth to call, invite and exhort, men are ſaid to have it, and may believe in it. But when they have rejected it, it is at length withdrawn, and then they know not where to go. And therefore to ſuch rebellious ones, the day of the Lord is ſaid to be darkneſs and not *light*. Amos v. 18.

36. That *a meaſure of this ſaving light or grace is given to all*, Chriſt telleth us expreſsly in the parable of the ſower, Matt. xiii. Mark iv. and Luke viii. where he ſaith, That this ſeed ſown in thoſe ſeveral ſorts of ground is *the word of the kingdom*, even that word which, as St. James ſaith, *is able to ſave the ſoul*. Now we may obſerve, that the ſeed which was ſown by the *way ſide*, and in the *ſtony* and *thorny ground*, although it did not profit there, was the ſame ſeed which was ſown on the *good ground*. But the cares of the world, or the deceitfulneſs of riches, or the deſire of other things, or the fear of perſecution, hinders this ſeed from growing in the hearts of many. Not, but that, in its own nature, it is ſufficient to ſalvation; being the very ſame with

that, which groweth up and profpereth in the hearts of thofe who receive it. So that, though all are not faved by it, yet there is a feed of falvation fown in the hearts of all, which would grow up and fave the foul, if it were not choaked and hindered.

37. To this anfwers the parable of the *talents*, Matt. xxv. He that had two *talents* was accepted as well as he that had five, becaufe he ufed them to his maſter's profit. And he that had one might have done the fame. His *talent* was of the fame nature with the reſt, and was as capable to have brought forth an increafe in proportion, as any of theirs. And fo, though there be not a like proportion of grace given to all, but to fome *five talents*, to fome *two*, and to fome *one talent* only, yet there is given to *all* that which is fufficient, and no more is required than according to what is given: For *unto whomfoever much is given, of him alfo much fhall be required.* Luke xii. 48. *He that had the two talents was accepted* in giving *four*, nothing lefs than he that gave the *ten*. So fhould he alfo that gave the *one*, if he had given *two*. And no doubt *one* was as capable of producing *two*, as *five* of producing *ten*, or *two four*.

38. I fhall add but one proof more, *That all men have a meafure of faving grace*, which is that of the apoſtle Paul to Titus c. ii. 11. *The grace of God that bringeth falvation hath appeared unto all men:* Than which there can be nothing more clear, it comprehending both parts of the controverſy.

verſy. Firſt, it teſtifies, that it is no natural principle, but the *grace of God bringeth ſalvation.* Secondly, it ſays that this hath appeared, not to *a few*, but *to all men.* And there is nothing (as the following words declare) required of man, which this grace teacheth not. Yet I have heard a public preacher, to evade the ſtrength of this text, and deny his grace to be ſaving, ſay, *It means only common graces, ſuch as is the heat of the fire and the light of the ſun.* Such is the darkneſs of thoſe that oppoſe the truth! Whereas the text ſaith expreſsly, it is ſaving (Σωτηριος.) Others that cannot deny but it is ſaving, ſay, This *all*, means not every individual, but only ſome of all kinds. But is a bare denial ſufficient to overturn a poſitive aſſertion? If the ſcriptures may be ſo abuſed, what ſo abſurd as may not be pleaded for them? Or what ſo manifeſt may not be denied? We have then no reaſon to be ſtaggered at their denying what the ſcripture expreſly affirms. They may as well perſuade us, that we do not intend that which we affirm, as make us believe the apoſtle ſpeaks a thing in plain words, and yet intends quite the contrary.

39. And indeed can there be any thing more abſurd, than to ſay where the word is plainly *all*, it does not mean *all*, but only *few?* It is true that *all* is ſometimes taken for the *greater number*, of two numbers mentioned; but let them ſhew us if they can, either in ſcripture, or profane or eccleſiaſtical writings, that any man who wrote

ſenſe, did ever uſe the word *all*, to expreſs of two numbers the leſſer. Whereas they affirm, that the far leſſer number have received ſaving grace, and yet will have the apoſtle to ſignify them only by the word *all:* contrary to all the rules of ſpeaking, as well as to the whole tenor of the goſpel.

40. We conclude then, That *the goſpel is* indeed *good tidings of great joy which may be unto all people:* That the miniſters thereof, *are to preach to every creature, to declare to all the common ſalvation,* and to offer *repentance and remiſſion of ſins to all, warning every one, and exhorting every one:* That Chriſt *died for all* who died in *Adam*, that *he gave himſelf a ranſom for all*; *taſting death for every man:* That *he came not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be ſaved: That he willeth that all men ſhould be ſaved, and willeth not that any ſhould periſh:* That *he is the propitiation not for our ſins only, who believe, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world:* That accordingly he giveth to all a day of viſitation, wherein it is poſſible for them to be ſaved; and therein a meaſure of ſaving grace, ſo that if they die, their blood is on their own heads: ſeeing, when they *might* they *would* not come unto him, that they might have life.

SERIOUS

SERIOUS THOUGHTS

UPON

THE PERSEVERANCE

OF

THE SAINTS.

1. MANY large volumes have been already publiſhed on this important ſubject. But the very length of them makes them hard to be underſtood, or even purchaſed by common readers. A ſhort, plain treatiſe on this head, is what ſerious men have long deſired, and what is here offered to thoſe whom God has endowed with love and meekneſs of wiſdom.

2. By the *ſaints* I underſtand, thoſe who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himſelf: thoſe who are endued with the faith that

purifies the heart, that produces a good conſcience: thoſe who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the ſpiritual, inviſible church: thoſe who are branches of the true vine, of whom Chriſt ſays, *I am the vine, ye are the branches:* thoſe who ſo effectually know Chriſt, as by that knowledge to have eſcaped the pollutions of the world: thoſe who ſee the light of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, of the witneſs and the fruits of the Spirit: thoſe who live by faith in the Son of God: thoſe who are ſanctified by the blood of the covenant: thoſe to whom all, or any of theſe characters belong, I mean by the term *ſaints*.

3. Can any of theſe fall away? By *falling away* we mean, not barely falling into ſin. This, it is granted, they may. But can they fall *totally?* Can any of theſe ſo fall from God, as to periſh everlaſtingly?

4. I am ſenſible, either ſide of this queſtion is attended with great difficulties; ſuch as reaſon alone could never remove. Therefore to the law and to the teſtimony. Let the living oracles decide: and if theſe ſpeak for us, we neither ſeek nor want farther witneſs.

5. On this authority, I believe a ſaint may fall away; that one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himſelf, may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God, as to periſh everlaſtingly.

I. For

I. For thus saith the Lord, † *When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.*

That this is to be understood of eternal death, appears from the 26th verse:

When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them, (here is temporal death) *for his iniquity that he hath done, he shall die:* (here is death eternal.)

It appears farther from the whole scope of the the chapter, which is to prove, ‡ *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*

If you say, "the soul here means the body," I answer, that will die whether you sin or no.

6. Again, thus saith the Lord, § *When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live, if he trust to his own righteousness,* (yea, or to that promise as absolute and unconditional) *and committeth iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered, but for the iniquity that he hath committed shall he die.*

Again, ‖ *When the righteous turneth from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.*

Therefore one who is holy and righteous in

† Ezek. xviii. 24. ‡ ver. 4. § c. xxxiii. v. 13. ‖ v. 18.

the judgment of God himſelf, may yet ſo fall as to periſh everlaſtingly.

7. "But how is this conſiſtent with what God declared elſewhere, † *If his children forſake my law and walk not in my judgments—I will viſit their offences with the rod, and their ſin with ſcourges. Nevertheleſs my loving-kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips: I have ſworn once by my holineſs, that I will not fail David.*"

I anſwer, There is no manner of inconſiſtency between one declaration and the other. The prophet declares the juſt judgment of God, againſt every righteous man who falls from his righteouſneſs. The pſalmiſt declares ‡ *the old loving-kindneſſes which God ſware unto David in his truth. I have found*, ſaith he, *David my ſervant; with my holy oil have I anointed him. My hand ſhall hold him faſt, and my arm ſhall ſtrengthen him—His ſeed alſo will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.* It follows, § *But if his children forſake my law, and walk not in my judgments—Nevertheleſs my loving-kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break. I will not fail David. His ſeed ſhall endure for ever, and his throne as the ſun before me.*

May not every man ſee, that the *covenant* here

† Pſalm lxxxix. v. 31—34. ‡ v. 48. 21, 22, 30.
§ ver. 31, &c.

here ſpoken of, relates wholly to David and his ſeed or children? Where then is the inconſiſtency between the moſt abſolute promiſe made to a particular family, and that ſolemn account which God has here given of his way of dealing with mankind?

* Beſides, the very covenant mentioned in theſe words is not abſolute, but conditional. The condition of repentance in caſe of forſaking God's law was implied, though not expreſt. And ſo ſtrongly implied, that this condition failing, not being performed, God did alſo *fail David.* He did *alter the thing that had gone out of his lips*, and yet without any impeachment of his truth. He ‖ *abhorred and forſook his anointed*, the ſeed of David, whoſe throne, if they had repented, ſhould have been *as the days of heaven.* He did ¶ *break the covenant of his ſervant, and caſt his crown to the ground.* So vainly are theſe words of the Pſalmiſt brought to contradict the plain, full teſtimony of the Prophet.

8. Nor is there any contradiction between this teſtimony of God by Ezekiel, and thoſe words which he ſpake by Jeremiah: *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love; therefore with loving-kindneſs have I drawn thee.* For do theſe words aſſert, that no righteous man ever turns from his righteouſneſs? No ſuch thing. They do not touch the queſtion, but ſimply declare God's love

‖ v. 37. ¶ v. 38.

love to the Jewiſh church. To ſee this in the cleareſt light, you need only read over the whole ſentence. † *At the ſame time, ſaith the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Iſrael, and they ſhall be my people. Thus ſaith the Lord, the people which were left of the ſword, found grace in the wilderneſs, even Iſrael, when I cauſed him to reſt. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me*, ſaith the prophet, ſpeaking in the perſon of Iſrael, *ſaying, I have loved thee with an everlaſting love, therefore with loving-kindneſs have I drawn thee. Again I will build thee, and thou ſhalt be built, O virgin of Iſrael.*

* Suffer me here to obſerve once for all, a fallacy which is conſtantly uſed by almoſt all writers on this point. They perpetually beg the queſtion by applying to particular perſons, aſſertions, or prophecies, which relate only to the church in general: and ſome of them only to the Jewiſh church and nation, as diſtinguiſhed from all other people.

If you ſay, "But it was particularly revealed to *me*, that God had loved *me* with an everlaſting love:" I anſwer, Suppoſe it was, (which might bear a diſpute) it proves no more, at the moſt, than that *you* in particular ſhall perſevere: but does not affect the general queſtion, Whether others ſhall, or ſhall not?

9. Secondly, One who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good con-

† Ch. xxxi. v. 1, 2, 3, 4.

conſcience, may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God as to periſh everlaſtingly.

For thus ſaith the inſpired apoſtle, † *War a good warfare, holding faith and a good conſcience, which ſome having put away, concerning faith have made ſhipwreck.*

Obſerve, 1. Theſe men (ſuch as Hymeneus and Alexander) had once the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conſcience. This they once had, or they could not have *put it away.*

Obſerve, 2. They *made ſhipwreck* of the faith, which neceſſarily implies the total and final loſs of it. For a veſſel once wrecked can never be recovered. It is totally and finally loſt.

And the apoſtle himſelf in his ſecond epiſtle to Timothy, mentions one of theſe two as irrecoverably loſt. ‡ Alexander, ſays he, *did me much evil: The Lord ſhall reward him according to his works.* Therefore one who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conſcience, may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God as to periſh everlaſtingly.

10. " But how can this be reconciled with the words of our Lord, *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved.*"

Do you think theſe words mean, *he that believes* at this moment, *ſhall* certainly and inevitably *be ſaved?*

If

† 1 Tim. i. 18, 19. ‡ 2 Tim. iv. 14.

If this interpretation be good, then by all the rules of ſpeech, the other part of the ſentence muſt mean, *he* that does *not believe* at this moment, *ſhall* certainly and inevitably *be damned.*

Therefore that interpretation cannot be good. The plain meaning then of the whole ſentence, is, *He that believeth*, if he continue in faith, *ſhall be ſaved*; *he that believeth not*, if he continue in unbelief, *ſhall be damned.*

11. "But does not Chriſt ſay elſewhere, † *He that believeth hath everlaſting life?* And ‡ *He that believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death unto life.*"

I anſwer, 1. The love of God is everlaſting life. It is, in ſubſtance, the life of heaven. Now every one that believes, loves God, and therefore *hath everlaſting life.*

2. Every one that believes *is* therefore *paſſed from death*, ſpiritual death, *unto life*; and

3. *Shall not come into condemnation*, if he endureth in the faith unto the end: according to our Lord's own word, *He that endureth to the end ſhall be ſaved:* and § *Verily I ſay unto you, if a man keep my ſaying, he ſhall never ſee death.*

12. Thirdly, Thoſe who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the ſpiritual, inviſible church, may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God as to periſh everlaſtingly.

For

† John iii. 36. ‡ c. vi. v. 24. § John viii. 51.

For thus ſaith the apoſtle, ‖ *Some of the branches are broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakeſt of the root and fatneſs of the olive-tree.*

Be not high-minded, but fear: if God ſpared not the natural branches, take heed leſt he ſpare not thee.

Behold the goodneſs and ſeverity of God! On them which fell ſeverity; but toward thee goodneſs, if thou continue in his goodneſs; otherwiſe thou ſhalt be cut off.

We may obſerve here, 1. The perſons ſpoken to were actually grafted into the olive-tree.

2. This olive-tree is not barely the outward, viſible church, but the inviſible, conſiſting of holy believers. So the text. † *If the firſt fruit be holy, the lump is holy; and if the root be holy, ſo are the branches.* And, *Becauſe of unbelief they were broken off, and thou ſtandeſt by faith.*

3. Theſe holy believers were ſtill liable to be cut off from the inviſible church, into which they were then grafted.

4. Here is not the leaſt intimation of thoſe who were ſo cut off, being ever grafted in again.

Therefore thoſe who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the ſpiritual, inviſible church, may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God as to periſh everlaſtingly.

13. " But how does this agree with the 29th verſe,

‖ Rom. xi. 17, 20, 21, 22. † ver. 16.

verſe, *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance?*"

The preceding verſe ſhews: *as touching the election* (the unconditional election of the Jewiſh nation) *they are beloved for the fathers ſake:* for the ſake of their fore-fathers. It follows (in proof of this, that *they are beloved for the fathers ſake*, that God has ſtill bleſſings in ſtore for the Jewiſh nation) *For the gifts and calling of God, are without repentance:* for God doth not repent of any bleſſings he hath given them, or any privileges he hath called them to. The words here referred to, were originally ſpoken with a peculiar regard to theſe national bleſſings. † *God is not a man, that he ſhould not lie, neither the ſon of man, that he ſhould repent.*

14. * " But do not you hereby make God changeable? Whereas ‡ *with him is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning?*" By no means, God is unchangeably holy. Therefore he always *loveth righteouſneſs and hateth iniquity.* He is unchangeably good. Therefore he pardoneth all that *repent and believe the goſpel.* And he is unchangeably juſt; therefore he *rewardeth every man according to his works.* But all this hinders not his reſiſting when they are proud, thoſe to whom he gave grace when they were humble. Nay, his unchangeableneſs itſelf requires, that if they grow high minded, God ſhould cut them off:

† Numb. xxiii. 19. ‡ James i. 17.

off: that there ſhould be a proportionable change, in all the divine diſpenſations toward them.

15. * "But how then is God *faithful?*" I anſwer, in fulfilling every promiſe which he hath made, to all to whom it is made, all who fulfil the condition of that promiſe. More particularly, 1ſt, ‖ *God is faithful* in that *he will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able* to bear. 2d, § *The Lord is faithful, to eſtabliſh and keep you from evil* (if you put your truſt in him) from all the evil which you might otherwiſe ſuffer, through *unreaſonable and wicked men.* 3. † *Quench not the Spirit; hold faſt that which is good; abſtain from all appearance of evil:* and your *whole ſpirit, ſoul and body* ſhall *be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Faithful is he that calleth you, who alſo will do it.* 4. Be not diſobedient unto the heavenly calling, and ‡ *God is faithful by whom ye were called, to confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameleſs, in the day of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Yet notwithſtanding all this, unleſs you fulfil the condition, you cannot attain the promiſe.

"Nay, but are not *all the promiſes, yea and amen?*" They are. They are *firm* as the pillars of heaven. Perform the condition: and the promiſe is ſure. Believe, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.

"But

‖ 1 Cor. x. 13. § 2 Theſſ. iii. 2, 3. † 1 Theſſ. v. 19, &c.
‡ 1 Cor. i. 8, 9.

" But many promiſes are abſolute and unconditional." In many, the condition is not expreſt. But this does not prove, there is none implied. No promiſes can be expreſt, in a more abſolute form, that thoſe above cited from the 89th pſalm. And yet we have ſeen, a condition was implied even there, though none was expreſt.

16. " But there is no condition either expreſt or implied, in thoſe words of St. *Paul*, ‖ *I am perſuaded that neither death, nor life, nor height nor depth, nor any creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.*"

Suppoſe there is not (which will bear a diſpute) yet what will this prove? Juſt thus much, that the apoſtle was at that time fully perſuaded of his own perſeverance. And I doubt not, but many believers at this day, have the very ſame perſuaſion, termed in ſcripture, the full aſſurance of hope. But this does not prove, that every believer ſhall perſevere: any more than that every believer is thus fully perſuaded of his perſeverance.

IV. 17. Fourthly, Thoſe who are branches of the true vine, of whom Chriſt ſays, I am the vine, ye are the branches, may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God, as to periſh everlaſtingly.

For thus ſaith our bleſſed Lord himſelf, *I am*

‖ Rom. viii. 38, 39.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away.

I am the vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Here we may observe, 1. The persons spoken of were in *Christ, branches of the true vine:*

2. Some, of these *branches abide not* in Christ, but *the father taketh them away.*

3. The *branches* which *abide not are cast forth,* cast out from Christ and his church:

4. They are not only *cast forth but withered*; consequently never grafted in again. Nay,

5. They are not only *cast forth* and *withered,* but also *cast into the fire.* And

6. They *are burned.* It is not possible for words more strongly to declare, that even those who are now branches in the true vine, may yet so fall, as to perish everlastingly.

18. By this clear, indisputable declaration of our Lord, we may interpret those which might be otherwise liable to dispute: wherein it is certain, whatever he meant beside, he did not mean to contradict himself. For example, *This is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing.* Most sure; *all that God hath given him,* or (as it is expreſt in the

next

next verſe) *every one which believeth on him*, namely, to the end, he *will raiſe up at the laſt day* to reign with him for ever.

Again, † *I am the living bread—If any man eat of this bread* (by faith) *he ſhall live for ever.* True; if he continue to eat thereof. And who can doubt of it?

Again, § *My ſheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand.*

In the preceding text, the condition is only implied. In this it is plainly expreſt. They are *my ſheep* that *hear my voice*, that *follow me* in all holineſs. And *if ye do thoſe things ye ſhall never fall.* None ſhall *pluck you out of my hands.*

Again, ‡ *Having loved his own which were in the world, he loveth them unto the end. Having loved his own*, namely the apoſtles, (as the very next words *which were in the world* evidently ſhew) *he loved them unto the end* of his life, and manifeſted that love to the laſt.

19. Once more, ‖ *Holy Father, keep through thine own name thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may be one, as we are one.*

Great ſtreſs has been laid upon this text; and it has been hence inferred, that all *thoſe whom* the Father *had given him* (a phraſe frequently occurring

† John vi. 51. § Chap. x. 14. ‡ John xiii. 1. ‖ Ch. 17. v. 11.

occurring in this chapter) muſt infallibly perſevere to the end.

And yet in the very next verſe, our Lord himſelf declares, that one of *thoſe whom* the Father *had given him*, did not perſevere unto the end, but periſhed everlaſtingly.

His own words are. † *Thoſe that thou gaveſt me, I have kept, and none of them is loſt, but the ſon of perdition.*

So one even of theſe was finally loſt! A demonſtration that the phraſe *Thoſe whom thou haſt given me*, ſignifies here (if not in moſt other places too) the twelve apoſtles and them only.

20. On this occaſion, I cannot but obſerve another common inſtance of begging the queſtion, of taking for granted, what ought to be proved: it is uſually laid down, as an indiſputable truth, that whatever our Lord ſpeaks to or of his apoſtles, is to be applied to all believers. But this cannot be allowed by any who impartially ſearch the ſcriptures. They cannot allow, without clear and particular proof, that any one of thoſe texts, which related primarily to the apoſtles (as all men grant) belong to any but them.

V. 21. Fifthly, Thoſe who ſo effectually know Chriſt, as by that knowledge to have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back

† 2 Pet. ii. 20. 21.

back into thoſe pollutions, and periſh everlaſtingly.

For thus ſaith the apoſtle Peter, † *If after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, thro' the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, (the only poſſible way of eſcaping them) *they are again intangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worſe with them than the beginning.*

For it had been better for them, not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, than after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

That the *knowledge of the way of righteouſneſs*, which they had attained, was an inward, experimental knowledge, is evident from that other expreſſion, *They had eſcaped the pollutions of the world:* an expreſſion parallel to that in the preceding chapter, ‡ *Having eſcaped the corruption which is in the world.* And in both chapters, this effect is aſcribed to the ſame cauſe: termed in the firſt, *The knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue*; in the ſecond, more explicitly, *the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

And yet they loſt that experimental knowledge of Chriſt and the way of righteouſneſs: they fell back into the ſame pollutions they had eſcaped; and were *again intangled therein and overcome. They turned from the holy commandment*

† 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21. ‡ v. 4.

mandment delivered to them, ſo that their *latter end was worſe than their beginning*.

Therefore thoſe who ſo effectually know Chriſt, as by that knowledge to have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into thoſe pollutions and periſh everlaſtingly.

22. And this is perfectly conſiſtent with St. Peter's words, in the firſt chapter of his former epiſtle: *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation.* Undoubtedly ſo are all they who ever attain eternal ſalvation. It is the power of God only, and not our own, by which we are kept one day or one hour.

VI. 23. Sixthly, Thoſe who ſee the light of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, of the witneſs and the fruits of the Spirit; may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God, as to periſh everlaſtingly.

For thus ſaith the inſpired writer to the Hebrews, † *It is impoſſible for thoſe who were once inlightened, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt—If they fall away, to renew them again to repentance; ſeeing they crucify to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open ſhame.*

Muſt not every unprejudiced perſon ſee, the expreſſions here uſed, are ſo ſtrong and clear, that they cannot without groſs and palpable

 wreſting

† Ch. 6. v. 4, 6. Epheſ. i. 17, 18, 19.

wreſting, be underſtood of any but true believers?

They *were once inlightened:* an expreſſion familiar with the apoſtle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So, *The God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, give unto you the ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation.—The eyes of your underſtanding being* inlightened, *that ye may know what is the hope of his calling—And what is the exceeding greatneſs of his glory, to us-ward that believe.* So again, † *God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* This is a light which no unbelievers have. They are utter ſtrangers to ſuch inlightening. ‡ *The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

They had taſted of the heavenly gift (emphatically ſo called) *and were made partakers of the* Holy Ghoſt. So St. Peter likewiſe couples them together; ‖ *Be baptized for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the* Holy Ghoſt: whereby the love of God was ſhed abroad in their heart, with all the other fruits of the Spirit. Yea, it is remarkable, that our Lord himſelf in his grand commiſſion to St. Paul (to which the apoſtle probably alludes in theſe words) comprizes all theſe three particulars.

I

† 2 Cor. iv. 6. ‡ v. 4. ‖ Acts ii. 38.

§ *I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs to light and from the power of Satan unto God*, (here contracted into that one expreſſion, *They were inlightened*) *that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins* (*the heavenly gift*) *and an inheritance among them which are ſanctified:* which are made *partakers of the Holy Ghoſt*, of all the ſanctifying influences of the Spirit.

The expreſſion, *They* taſted *of the heavenly gift*, is taken from the pſalmiſt, † *Taſte and ſee that the Lord is good.* As if he had ſaid, be ye as aſſured of his love, as of any thing you ſee with your eyes. And let the aſſurance thereof be ſweet to your ſoul, as honey is to your tongue.

And yet thoſe who had been thus *inlightened*, had *taſted* this *gift*, and been thus *partakers of the Holy Ghoſt*, ſo *fell away*, that it was *impoſſible to renew them again* to repentance.

" But the apoſtle only makes a ſuppoſition, *If they ſhall fall away.*"

I anſwer, The apoſtle makes no ſuppoſition at all. There is no *if* in the original. The words are, Ἀδύνατον τοὺς ἅπαξ φωτισθέντας--καὶ παραπεσόντας. That is, in plain Engliſh, *It is impoſſible to renew again unto repentance, thoſe who were one inlightened* and have fallen away: therefore they muſt periſh everlaſtingly.

24. " But if ſo, then farewel all my comfort."

§ Ch. 26. v. 18. † Pſalm xxxiv. 8.

Then your comfort depends on a poor foundation. My comfort ſtands not on any opinion, either that a believer can, or cannot fall away, not on the remembrance of any thing wrought in me *yeſterday*; but on what is *to-day*. On my preſent knowledge of God in Chriſt, reconciling me to himſelf. On my now beholding the light of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt; walking in the light as he is in the light, and having fellowſhip with the Father and with the Son. My comfort is, that thro' grace I now believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and that his Spirit doth bear witneſs with my ſpirit, that I am a child of God. I take comfort in this and this only, that I ſee Jeſus at the right hand of God; that I perſonally for myſelf, and not for another, have an hope full of immortality; that I feel the love of God ſhed abroad in my heart, being crucified to the world, and the world crucified to me. My rejoicing is this, the teſtimony of my conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God, I have my converſation in the world.

Go and find, if you can, a more ſolid joy, a more bliſsful comfort, on this ſide heaven. But this comfort is not ſhaken, be that opinion true or falſe; whether the ſaints in general can or cannot fall.

If you take up with any comfort ſhort of this, you lean on the ſtaff of a broken reed, which not only will not bear your weight, but will enter into your hand and pierce you.

25. Seventhly,

25. Seventhly, Thoſe who live by faith, may yet fall from God and periſh everlaſtingly.

For thus ſaith the ſame inſpired writer, † *The juſt ſhall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him. The juſt*, the juſtified perſon, *ſhall live by faith*, even now ſhall he live the life which is hid with Chriſt in God: and if he endure unto the end, he ſhall live with God for ever. *But if any man draw back*, ſaith the Lord, *my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*: That is, I will utterly caſt him off; and accordingly the drawing back here ſpoken of, is termed in the verſe immediately following, *drawing back to perdition.*

" But the perſon ſuppoſed to draw back is not the ſame with him that is ſaid to live by faith."

I anſwer, 1. Who is it then? Can any man draw back from faith who never came to it? But

2. Had the text been fairly tranſlated, there had been no pretence for this objection. For the original runs thus: Ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται. If ὁ δίκαιος, *the juſt man that lives by faith* (ſo the expreſſion neceſſarily implies, there being no other nominative to the verb) *draws back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.*

" But the apoſtle adds, *We are not of them who draw back unto perdition.*" And what will

† Heb. x. 38.

you infer from thence? This is so far from contradicting what has been observed before, that it manifestly confirms it. It is a farther proof, that there are those *who draw back unto perdition*, although the apostle was not of that number. Therefore those who live by faith, may yet fall from God and perish everlastingly.

26. "But does not God say to every one that lives by faith, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?*"

The whole sentence runs thus. *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* True; provided *your conversation be without covetousness, and ye be content with such things as ye have.* Then you may *boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

Do you not see, 1. That this promise, as here recited, relates wholly to temporal things? 2. That even thus taken, it is not absolute but conditional, and 3. That the condition is expressly mentioned in the very same sentence?

27. Eighthly, Those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus again saith the apostle, † *If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indig-*

† Heb. x. 26.

indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing.

It is undeniably plain, 1. That the person mentioned here, was once sanctified by the blood of the covenant. 2. That he afterwards by known, wilful sin, trod under foot the Son of God: And 3. That he hereby incurred a sorer punishment than death, namely, death everlasting.

Therefore, those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

28. "What! Can the blood of Christ burn in hell? Or can the purchase of the blood of Christ go thither?"

I answer 1. The blood of Christ cannot burn in hell, no more than it can be spilt on the earth. The heavens must contain both his flesh and blood, until the restitution of all things. But

2. If the oracles of God are true; one who was purchased by the blood of Christ may go thither. For he that was sanctified by the blood of Christ, was purchased by the blood of Christ. But one who was sanctified by the blood of Christ, may nevertheless go to hell; may fall under that

fiery indignation, which ſhall for ever devour the adverſaries.

29. "Can a child of God then go to hell? Or can a man be a child of God to-day, and a child of the devil to-morrow? If God is our Father once, is he not our Father always?" I anſwer,

1. * A child of God, that is a true believer (for *he* that believeth is born of God) while he continues a true believer, cannot go to hell. But 2. If a believer make ſhipwreck of the faith, he is no longer a child of God. And then he may go hell, yea, and certainly will, if he continues in unbelief. 3. If a believer may make ſhipwreck of the faith, then a man that believes now, may be an unbeliever ſome time hence; yea, very poſſibly, to-morrow: But if ſo, he who is a child of God to-day, may be a child of the devil to-morrow. For 4. God is the Father of them that believe, ſo long as they believe. But the devil is the father of them that believe not, whether they did once believe or no.

30. The ſum of all is this. If the ſcriptures are true, thoſe who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himſelf: thoſe who are indued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conſcience: thoſe who are grafted into the good olive tree, the ſpiritual, inviſible church: thoſe who are branches of the true vine, of whom Chriſt ſays, I am the vine, ye are the branches: thoſe who ſo effectually know Chriſt,

Chriſt, as by that knowledge to have eſcaped the pollutions of the world: thoſe who ſee the light of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, of the witneſs and of the fruits of the Spirit: thoſe who live by faith in the Son of God: thoſe who are ſanctified by the blood of the covenant; may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God, as to periſh everlaſtingly.

Therefore, let him that ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.

PREDESTINATION

CALMLY CONSIDERED.

That to the height of this great argument,
I may assert eternal providence,
And justify the ways of God with man.

MILTON.

I. I AM inclined to believe, that many of those who enjoy the faith which worketh by love, may remember some time, when the power of the Highest wrought upon them in an eminent manner; when the voice of the Lord laid the mountains low, brake all the rocks in pieces, and mightily shed abroad his love in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto them. And at that time it is certain, they had no power to *resist* the grace of God. They were then

then no more able to ſtop the courſe of that torrent which carried all before it, than to ſtem the waves of the ſea with their hand, or to ſtay the ſun in the midſt of heaven.

II. And the children of God may continually obſerve, how his love leads them on from faith to faith: with what tenderneſs he watches over their ſouls; with what care he brings them back if they go aſtray, and then upholds their going in his path, that their footſteps may not ſlide. They cannot but obſerve, how unwilling he is, to let them go from ſerving him; and how, notwithſtanding the ſtubbornneſs of their wills, and the wildneſs of their paſſions, he goes on in his work, conquering and to conquer, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.

III. The farther this work is carried on in their hearts, the more earneſtly do they cry out, *Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give the praiſe, for thy mercy and for thy truth's ſake.* The more deeply are they convinced, that *by grace we are ſaved; not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt:* that we are not pardoned and accepted with God, for the ſake of any thing we have done, but wholly and ſolely for the ſake of Chriſt, of what he hath done and ſuffered for us. The more aſſuredly likewiſe do they know, that the condition of this acceptance is faith alone: before which gift of God no good work can be

done, none which hath not in it the nature of sin.

IV. How *easily* then may a believer infer, from what he hath experienced in his own soul, that the true grace of God *always* works *irresistibly* in every believer? That God will finish wherever he has begun this work, so that it is impossible for any believer to *fall from grace?* And lastly, that the reason why God gives this, to some only, and not to others, is because of his own will, without any previous regard either to their faith or works, he hath *absolutely*, *unconditionally predestinated* them to life, before the foundation of the world.

V. Agreeable hereto, in the Protestant confession of faith, drawn up at Paris, in the year 1559, we have these words: (article 12.)

"We believe, that out of the general corruption and condemnation, in which all men are plunged, God draws those whom in his eternal and unalterable counsel, he has elected by his own goodness, and mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ, without considering their works, leaving the others in the same corruption and condemnation."—

VI. To the same effect speak the Dutch divines assembled at Dort, in the year 1618. Their words are: (Art. 6. *et seq.*)

"Whereas

" Whereas in proceſs of time, God beſtowed faith on ſome, and not on others, this proceeds from his eternal decree—According to which, he ſoftens the hearts of the elect, and leaveth them that are not elect in their wickedneſs and hardneſs.

" And herein is diſcovered the difference put between men equally loſt, that is to ſay, the decree of election and reprobation.

" Election is, the unchangeable decree of God, by which, before the foundation of the world, he hath choſen in Chriſt unto ſalvation, a fet number of men. This election is one and the ſame of all which are to be ſaved.

" Not all men are elected, but ſome not-elected; whom God in his unchangeable good pleaſure hath decreed, to leave in the common miſery, and not to beſtow ſaving faith upon them: but leaving them in their own ways, at laſt to condemn and puniſh them everlaſtingly, for their unbelief, and alſo for their other ſins. And this is the decree of reprobation."

VII. Likewiſe in the confeſſion of faith, ſet forth by the aſſembly of Engliſh and Scotch divines, in the year 1646, are theſe words. (chap. 3.)

" God from all eternity did unchangeably ordain whatſoever comes to paſs.

" By the decree of God, for the manifeſtation of his glory, ſome men and angels are predeſtinated

deſtinated unto everlaſting life, and others fore-ordained to everlaſting death.

" Theſe angels and men, thus predeſtinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably deſigned, and their number ſo certain and definite, that it cannot be either increaſed or diminiſhed.

" Thoſe of mankind that are predeſtinated unto life, God before the foundation of the world—hath choſen in Chriſt unto everlaſting glory—without any foreſight of faith or good works.

" The reſt of mankind God was pleaſed—for the glory of his ſovereign power over his creatures, to paſs by, and to ordain them to diſhonour and wrath."

No leſs expreſs are Mr. Calvin's words, in his *Chriſtian Inſtitutions*, (chap. 21. ſect. 1.)

" All men are not created for the ſame end; but ſome are fore-ordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation. So according as every man was created for the one end or the other, we ſay, he was *elected*, i. e. predeſtinated to life, or *reprobated*, i. e. predeſtinated to damnation."

VIII. Indeed there are ſome who aſſert the decree of election, and not the decree of reprobation. They aſſert, that God hath by a poſitive, unconditional decree, choſen ſome to life and ſalvatoni: but not that he hath by any ſuch decree,

decree, devoted the reſt of mankind to deſtruction. Theſe are they to whom I would addreſs myſelf firſt. And let me beſeech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to lift up your hearts to him, and to beg of him to free you from all prepoſſeſſion, from the prejudices even of your tender years, and from whatſoever might hinder the light of God from ſhining in upon your ſouls. Let us calmly and fairly weigh theſe things in the balance of the ſanctuary. And let all be done in love and meekneſs of wiſdom, as becomes thoſe who are fighting under one captain, and who humbly hope, they are joint-heirs thro' him of the glory which ſhall be revealed.

I am verily perſuaded, that in the uprightneſs of your hearts, you defend the decree of unconditional election; even in the ſame uprightneſs wherein you reject and abhor that of unconditional reprobation. But conſider, I intreat you, whether you are conſiſtent with yourſelves; conſider, whether this election can be ſeparate from reprobation; whether one of them does not imply the other, ſo that in holding one, you muſt hold both.

IX. That this was the judgment of thoſe who had the moſt deeply conſidered the nature of theſe decrees, of the aſſembly of Engliſh and Scotch divines, of the reformed churches both in France and the Low Countries, and of Mr. Calvin himſelf, appears from their own words, beyond

beyond all poſſibility of contradiction. " Out of the general corruption (ſaith the French church) he draws thoſe whom he hath elected ; leaving the others in the ſame corruption, according to his immoveable decree." " By the decree of God (ſays the aſſembly of Engliſh and Scotch divines,) ſome are predeſtinated unto everlaſting life, others fore-ordained to everlaſting death." " God hath once for all (ſaith Mr. Calvin,) appointed, by an eternal and unchangeable decree, to whom he would give ſalvation, and whom he would devote to deſtruction." (Inſt. cap. 3. ſect. 7.) Nay, it is obſervable, Mr. Calvin ſpeaks with utter contempt and diſdain of all, who endeavour to ſeparate one from the other, who aſſert election without reprobation. "Many (ſays he) as it were to excuſe God, own election, and deny reprobation. But this is quite ſilly and childiſh. For election cannot ſtand without reprobation. Whom God paſſes by, thoſe he reprobates. It is one and the ſame thing." Inſt. l. 3. c. 23. ſect. 1.

X. Perhaps upon deeper conſideration, you will find yourſelf of the ſame judgment. It may be, you alſo hold reprobation, though you know it not. Do not you believe, that God who made *one veſſel unto honour*, hath made *another unto* eternal *diſhonour* ? Do not you believe, that the men who *turn the grace of our God into laſciviouſneſs, were before ordained of God unto this condemnation?* Do not you think, that for *this*

this same purpose God raised Pharaoh up, that he might shew his sovereign power in his destruction? And that *Jacob have I loved, but* Esau *have I hated*, refers to the eternal state? Why then, you hold absolute reprobation, and you think Esau and Pharaoh were instances of it as well as all those *vessels made unto dishonour*, those men *before ordained unto condemnation?*

XI. To set this matter in a still clearer light, you need only answer one question. Is any man saved who is not elected? Is it possible, that any not elected should be saved? If you say, No, you put an end to the doubt. You espouse election and reprobation together. You confirm Mr. Calvin's words, that "without reprobation, election itself cannot stand." You allow (though you was not sensible of it before, that "whom God elects not, them he reprobates."

* Try whether it be possible, in any particular case, to separate election from reprobation. Take one of these who are supposed not to be elected; one whom God hath not chosen unto life and salvation. Can this man be saved from sin and hell? You answer. "No."——Why not, "Because he is not elected. Because God hath unchangeably decreed, to save so many souls, and no more; and he is not of that number. Him God hath decreed to pass by; to leave him to everlasting destruction: in consequence of which irresistible decree, the man

man perifhes everlaftingly." O my brethren, how fmall is the difference between this, and broad, barefaced reprobation ?

XII. Let me intreat you to make this cafe your own. In the midft of life, you are in death; your foul is dead while you live, if you live in fin, if you do not live to God. And who can deliver you from the body of this death ? Only the grace of God in Jefus Chrift our Lord. But God hath decreed to give this grace, to others only, and not to you : to leave you in unbelief and fpiritual death, and for that unbelief to punifh you with death everlafting. Well then mayft thou cry, even till thy throat is dry, " O wretched man that I am !" For an unchangable, irrefiftible decree ftandeth between thee and the very poffibility of falvation. Go now and find out how to fplit the hair, between thy being reprobated, and not-elected ; how to feparate reprobation in its moft effectual fenfe, from unconditional election !

XIII. Acknowledge then, that you hold reprobation. Avow it in the face of the fun. To be conffiftent with yourfelf, you muft openly affert that " without reprobation this election cannot ftand." You know it cannot. You know if God hath fixt a decree, that *thefe men only* fhall be faved in fuch a decree it is manifeftly implied, that *all other men* fhall be damned. If God hath

hath decreed, that *this part* of mankind, and no more ſhall live eternally, you cannot but ſee it is therein decreed, "that *the other part* ſhall never ſee life." O let us deal ingenuouſly with each other. What we really hold, let us openly profeſs. And if reprobation be the truth, it will bear the light, for *the word of our God ſhall ſtand for ever.*

XIV. Now then, without any extenuation on the one hand, or exaggeration on the other, let us look upon this doctrine, call it what you pleaſe, naked and in its native colour. Before the foundations of the world were laid, God of his own mere will and pleaſure fixt a decree concerning all the children of men, who ſhould be born unto the end of the world. This decree was unchangeable with regard to God, and irreſiſtible with regard to man. And herein it was ordained, that one part of mankind ſhould be ſaved from ſin and hell, and all the reſt left to periſh for ever and ever, without hope. That none of theſe ſhould have that grace, which alone could prevent their dwelling with everlaſting burnings, God decreed, for this cauſe alone, "becauſe it was his good pleaſure:" and for this end, "to ſhew forth his glorious power, and his ſovereignty over all the earth."

XV. Now can you, upon reflection, believe this? Perhaps you will ſay, "I don't think about

about it." That will never do. You not only think about it (tho' it may be, confusedly) but speak about it too, when ever you speak of unconditional election. You don't think about it! What do you mean? Do you never think about Esau or Pharaoh? Or in general, about a *certain number* of souls, whom alone God hath decreed to save? Why, in that very thought reprobation lurks: it entered your heart the moment that entered. It stays as long as that stays, and you cannot speak that thought, without speaking of reprobation. True, it is covered with fig-leaves, so that a heedless eye may not observe it to be there. But if you narrowly observe, unconditional election cannot appear, without the cloven foot of reprobation.

XVI. But do not the scriptures speak of *election*? They say, St. Paul was "an *elected* or chosen vessel." Nay, and speak of great numbers of men, as, "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God." "You cannot therefore deny, there is such a thing as election. And if there is, what do you mean by it?"

I will tell you, in all plainness and simplicity. I believe it commonly means one of these two things; first, a divine appointment of some particular men, to do some particular work in the world. And this election I believe to be not only personal, but absolute and unconditional. Thus Cyrus was elected to rebuild the temple, and St. Paul

Paul with the twelve to preach the gospel. But I do not find this to have any necessary connection with eternal happiness. Nay, it is plain it has not; for one who is *elected* in this sense, may yet be lost eternally. *Have I not chosen* (elected) *you twelve*, saith our Lord? *Yet one of you hath a devil? Judas*, you see was elected as well as the rest. Yet is his lot with the devil and his angels.

XVII. I believe election means, secondly, a divine appointment of some men to eternal happiness. But I believe this election to be conditional, as well as the reprobation opposite thereto. I believe the eternal decree concerning both, is expressed in those words, *He that believeth shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be damned.* And this decree without doubt God will not change, and man cannot resist. According to this, all true *believers* are in scripture termed elect, as all who continue in *unbelief*, are so long properly *reprobates*, that is, *unapproved* of God and *without discernment* touching the things of the Spirit.

XVIII. Now God to whom all things are present at once, who sees all eternity at one view, *calleth the things that are not as tho' they were*; the things that are not yet as tho' they were now subsisting. Thus he calls *Abraham the father of many nations*, before even Isaac was born.

born. And thus Chriſt is called *the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*, tho' he was not ſlain, in fact, till ſome thouſand years after. In like manner God calleth true believers, *elect from the foundation of the world*: although they were not actually elect or believers, till many ages after, in their ſeveral generations. Then only it was that they were actually elected, when they were made the *ſons of God by faith*. Then were they in fact, *choſen and taken out of the world*; *elect* (ſaith St. Paul) *thro' belief of the truth*: or (as St. Peter expreſſes it) *elect, according to the fore-knowledge of God, thro' ſanctification of the Spirit*.

XIX. This election I as firmly believe, as I believe the ſcripture to be of God. But unconditional election I cannot believe; not only becauſe I cannot find it in ſcripture, but alſo (to wave all other conſiderations) becauſe it neceſſarily implies, unconditional reprobation. Find out any election which does not imply reprobation, and I will gladly agree to it. But reprobation I can never agree to, while I believe the ſcripture to be of God: as being utterly irreconcileable to the whole ſcope and tenor both of the Old and New Teſtament.

O that God would give me the deſire of my heart! That he would grant the thing which I long for! Even that you might now be free and calm, and open to the light of his Spirit? that

that you would impartially conſider, how it is poſſible to reconcile reprobation with the following ſcriptures!

Gen. iii. 17. *Becauſe thou haſt eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, ſaying, thou ſhalt not eat of it——In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread*——The curſe ſhall come on thee and thine offſpring, not becauſe of any abſolute decree of mine, but becauſe of thy ſin.

Chap. iv. 7. *If thou doſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doſt not well, ſin lieth at the door.* Sin only, not the decree of reprobation, hinders thy being accepted.

Deut. vii. 9. *Know that the Lord thy God, he is the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thouſand generations: and repayeth them that hate him to their face to deſtroy them.*

Ver. 12. *Wherefore if ye hearken to thoſe judgments and keep and do them, the Lord thy God ſhall keep unto thee the covenant which he ſware unto thy fathers.*

Chap. xii. v. 26, 27, 28. *Behold I ſet before you this day a bleſſing and a curſe: a bleſſing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God; and a curſe, if you will not obey.*

Chap. xxx. 15, *&c. See, I have ſet before thee this day, life and good, and death and evil: in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments —and the Lord thy God ſhall bleſs thee. But if*

thou

thou wilt not hear, I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish. I call heaven and earth to record this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore chuse life, that both thou and thy seed may live.

2 *Chron.* c. xv. *v.* 1, *&c. And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah, and he said,——The Lord is with you while ye be with him: and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.*

Ezra ix. 13, 14. *After all that is come upon us, for our evil deeds, and for our great trespasses: should we again break thy commandments, wouldst thou not be angry with us, till thou hadst consumed us?*

Job xxxvi. 5. *Behold God is mighty and despiseth not any.* Could he then reprobate any?

Psal. cxlv. 9. *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.*

Prov. i. 23, *&c. Turn you at my reproof; behold I will pour out my Spirit upon you.*

Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded—I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. Why? Because of my decree? No. But *because they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord.*

Isaiah lxv. 2, *&c. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people;—a people that provoked*

provoked me to anger continually to my face—Therefore will I meaſure their former work into their boſom—Ye ſhall all bow down to the ſlaughter, becauſe when I called, ye did not anſwer—Therefore ye ſhall leave your name for a curſe unto my choſen: for the Lord God ſhall ſlay thee, and call his ſervants by another name.

Ezek. xviii. 20, *&c. The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die. The ſon ſhall not bear* (eternally) *the iniquity of the father, neither ſhall the father bear the iniquity of the ſon—Have I any pleaſure at all that the wicked ſhall die, ſaith the Lord; and not that he ſhould return from his ways and live?*

Matt. vii. 26. *Every one that heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doeth them not, ſhall be likened unto a fooliſh man, which built his houſe upon the ſand.* Nay, he could not help it, if he was ordained thereto.

Chap. xi. 20, *&c. Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein moſt of his mighty works were done, becauſe they repented not. Wo unto thee, Chorazin, wo unto thee, Bethſaida: for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in ſackcloth and aſhes.* (What? If they were not *elected?* And if they of *Bethſadia* had been *elected*, would they not have repented too?") *Therefore I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, ſhalt be brought down to hell. For*

if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.

Chap. xii. 41. *The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here.* But what was this to the purpose, if *the men of Nineveh* were elected, and *this generation* of men were not?

Chap. xiii. 11, 12. *It is given unto you, to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given. For whosoever hath* (i. e. uses what he hath) *to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance. But whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.*

Chap. xxii. v. 8. *They which were called were not worthy*, were shut out from the marriage of the Lamb: why so? Because *they would not come*, v. 3.

The whole twenty-fifth chapter requires, and will reward your most serious consideration. If you can reconcile unconditional reprobation with this, you may reconcile it with the 18th of Ezekiel.

John iii. 18. *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love* (or *chuse*) *darkness rather than light.*

Chap.

Chap. v. 44. *How* can *ye believe, who receive honour one of another, and ſeek not the honour that cometh of God?* Obſerve the reaſon why they *could* not believe: it is not in God, but in themſelves.

Acts viii. 20, &c. *Thy money periſh with thee,* (and ſo doubtleſs it did) *Thou haſt neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the ſight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedneſs, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.* So that St. Peter had no thought of any abſolute reprobation even in the caſe of Simon Magus.

Rom. i. 20, &c. *They are without excuſe; becauſe when they knew God, they glorified him not as God—wherefore God alſo gave them up to uncleanneſs—who changing the truth of God into a lie—For this cauſe God gave them up to vile affections—As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things which are not convenient.*

2 Theſſ. ii. 10, &c. *Them that periſh, becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved. And for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, to believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.*

XX. How will you reconcile reprobation with the following ſcriptures, which declare God's willingneſs that all ſhould be ſaved?

Mat. xxii. 9. *As many as ye ſhall find, bid* (invite) *to the marriage.*

Mark xvi. 15. *Go ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature.*

Luke xix. 41, &c. *And when he came near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, ſaying, If* (rather *O that*) *thou hadſt known, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!*

John v. 34. *Theſe things I ſay, that ye may be ſaved*, viz. thoſe who perſecuted him, and *ſought to ſlay him*, ver. 16. and of whom he complains, ver. 40. *Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life.*

Acts xvii. 24, &c. *God that made the world and all things therein—giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth—That they ſhould ſeek the Lord* — Obſerve, this was God's end in creating all nations on all the earth.

Rom. v. 18. *As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, ſo by the righteouſneſs of one the free gift came upon all men unto juſtification of life.*

Chap. x. ver. 12. *The ſame Lord over all, is rich* (in mercy) *unto all that call upon him.*

1 Tim. ii. 3, 4. *This is good and acceptable in the ſight of God our Saviour*, who willeth all men *to be ſaved:* Chap. iv. ver. 10. *Who is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of thoſe that believe*, i. e. intentionally of all; and actually of believers.

James i. 5. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.*

2 Pet. iii. 9. *The Lord is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

1 John iv. 14. *We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son, to be the Saviour of the world.*

XXI. How will you reconcile reprobation with the following scriptures, which declare that Christ came to save all men, that he died for all, that he atoned for all, even for those that finally perish?

Mat. xviii. 11. *The Son of man is come to save that which is lost*, without any restriction.

John i. 29. *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

Chap. iii. 17. *God sent his Son into the world, that the world through him might be saved.*

Chap. xii. 47. *I came not* (now) *to judge the world, but to save the world.*

Rom. xiv. 15. *Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.*

1 Cor. viii. 11. *Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died.*

2 Cor. v. 14, &c. *We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that those* (or all) *who live should live unto him which died for them.* Here you see, not

only that Chriſt died for all men, but likewiſe the end of his dying for them.

1 Tim. ii. 6. *Chriſt Jeſus, who gave himſelf a ranſom for all.*

Heb. viii. 9. *We ſee Jeſus made lower than the angels, that he might taſte death for every man.*

2 Pet. ii. 1. *There ſhall be falſe teachers among you, who ſhall privately bring in damnable hereſies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction.* You ſee, he bought or redeemed even thoſe that periſh, that bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction.

1 John ii. 1, 2. *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our ſins,* (who are elect, according to the knowledge of God) *and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world.*

You are ſenſible, theſe are but a very ſmall part of the ſcriptures which might be brought on each of theſe heads. But they are enough: and they require no comment: taken in their plain, eaſy, and obvious ſenſe, they abundantly prove, that there is not, cannot be any ſuch thing as unconditional reprobation.

XXII. But to be a little more particular. How can you poſſibly reconcile reprobation with thoſe ſcriptures that declare the juſtice of God? To cite one for all.

Ezek.

Ezek. xviii. 2, &c. *What mean ye that ye use this proverb, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine: as the soul of the father, so the soul of the son is mine*; (and however I may *temporally* visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, yet this visitation extends no farther, but) *the soul that sinneth, it shall die*, for its own sin, and not another's. *But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right—he shall surely live, saith the Lord God. If he begat a son which is a robber—shall he then live? He shall not live; he shall surely die—Yet say ye, why, doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?* (Temporally he doth, as in the case of Achan, Korah, and a thousand others: but not eternally.) *When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth it shall die*, (shall die the second death.) *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. Yet ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O Israel. Is not my way equal?* (equitable, just) *Are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them, for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when*

the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive— Therefore I will judge you, O houſe of Iſrael, every one according to his ways, ſaith the Lord God. Repent and turn yourſelves from all your tranſgreſſions. So iniquity ſhall not be your ruin.

Through this whole paſſage God is pleaſed to appeal to man himſelf, touching the juſtice of his proceedings. And well might he appeal to our own conſcience, according to the account of them which is here given. But it is an account which all the art of man will never reconcile with unconditional reprobation.

XXIII. Do you think it will cut the knot to ſay, " Why, if God might juſtly have paſt by all men, (ſpeak out, if God might *juſtly* have *reprobated* all men, for it comes to the ſame point) then he may juſtly paſs by ſome. But God might *juſtly* have paſſed by all men." Are you ſure he might? Where is it written? I cannot find it in the word of God. Therefore I reject it as a bold, precarious aſſertion, utterly unſupported by holy ſcripture.

* If you ſay, " but you know in your own conſcience, God might juſtly have paſt by *you*:" I deny it. That God might *juſtly*, for my unfaithfulneſs to his grace, have *given me up* long ago, I grant: But this conceſſion ſuppoſes me

to

to have had that grace, which you say a reprobate never had.

* But besides, in making this supposition, of what God might have justly done, you suppose his justice might have been separate from his other attributes, from his mercy in particular. But this never was, nor ever will be: nor indeed is it possible it should. All his attributes are inseparably joined: they cannot be divided, not for a moment. Therefore this whole argument stands not only on an unscriptural, but on an absurd, impossible supposition.

XXIV. Do you say, "Nay, but is just for God to pass by whom he will, because of his sovereignty: for he saith himself, *May not I do what I will with my own?* And, *hath not the potter power over his own clay?*" I answer, the former of these sentences stands in the conclusion of that parable, (Mat. xx.) wherein our Lord reproves the Jews for murmuring at God's giving the same reward to the Gentiles as to them. To one of these murmurers it is that God says, *Friend, I do thee no wrong. Take that thine is, and go thy way. I will give unto this last even as unto thee.* Then follows, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?* As if he had said, "May I not give my own kingdom to whom I please? Art thou angry because I am merciful?" It is then undeniably clear, that God

does not here assert a right of reprobating every man. Here is nothing spoken of reprobation, bad or good. Here is no kind of reference thereto. This text therefore has nothing to do with the conclusion it was brought to prove.

XXV. But you add, *hath not the potter power over his own clay?* Let us consider the context of these words also. They are found in the ninth chapter of the epistle to the Romans; an epistle, the general scope and intent of which is, to publish the eternal, unchangeable προθεσις, purpose or decree of God, *He that believeth, shall be saved: he that believeth not, shall be damned.* The justice of God in condemning those that believed not, and the necessity of believing in order to salvation, the apostle proves at large in the three first chapters, which he confirms in the fourth by the example of Abraham. In the former part of the fifth and in the sixth chapter, he describes the happiness and holiness of true believers. (The latter part of the fifth is a digression, concerning the extent of the benefits flowing from the death of Christ.) In the seventh he shews, in what sense believers in Christ are delivered from the law: and describes the miserable bondage of those who are still under the law; that is, who are truly convinced of sin, but not able to conquer it. In the eighth he again describes the happy liberty of those who truly believe in Christ: and encou-

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rages them to ſuffer for the faith, as by other conſiderations, ſo by this in particular, *we know that all things work together for good to them that love God*, (ver. 28.) *to them that are called* (by the preaching of his word) *according to his purpoſe*, or decree, unalterably fixt from eternity, *he that believeth ſhall be ſaved. For whom he did foreknow* as believing, *he alſo did predeſtinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Moreover whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called*, by his word (ſo that term is uſually taken in St. Paul's epiſtles) *And whom he called, them he alſo juſtified*, (the word is here taken in its wideſt ſenſe, as including ſanctification alſo) *and whom he juſtified, them he glorified.* Thence to the end of the chapter, he ſtrongly encourages all thoſe, who had the love of God ſhed abroad in their hearts, to have a good hope, that no ſufferings ſhould ever *be able to ſeparate them from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus.*

XXVI. But as the apoſtle was aware, how deeply the Jews were offended at the whole tenor of his doctrine, and more eſpecially at his aſſerting, 1. That the Jews themſelves could not be ſaved without believing in Jeſus, and 2. That the Heathens by believing in him might partake of the ſame ſalvation: he ſpends the whole ninth chapter upon them: wherein 1. He declares the tender love he had for them, ver. 1—3. 2. Allows the great national privileges they enjoyed above

any people under heaven, ver. 4—5. 3. Anſwers their grand objection, to his doctrine, taken from the juſtice of God, to their fathers, ver. 6—13. 4. Removes another objection, taken from the juſtice of God, inter-weaving all along ſtrong reproofs to the Jews, for priding themſelves on thoſe privileges, which were owing merely to the good pleaſure of God, not to their father's goodneſs, any more than their own, ver. 14—23. 5. Reſumes and proves by ſcripture his former aſſertion, that many Jews would be loſt, and many Heathens ſaved, ver. 24—29. And laſtly, ſums up the general drift of this chapter, and indeed of the whole epiſtle. *What ſhall we ſay then?* What is the concluſion from the whole? The ſum of all which has been ſpoken? Why, that many Gentiles already partake of the great ſalvation, and many Jews fall ſhort of it. Wherefore? Becauſe they would not receive it by faith. And whoſoever believeth not, cannot be ſaved: whereas, *whoſoever believeth* in Chriſt, whether Jew or Gentile, *ſhall not be aſhamed.*— ver. 30—33.

XXVII. Thoſe words, *hath not the potter power over his own clay?* Are part of St. Paul's anſwer to that objection, that it was unjuſt for God to ſhew that mercy to the Gentiles, which he with-held from his own people. This he firſt ſimply denies, ſaying God forbid! And then obſerves,

ſerves, that according to his own words to Moſes, God has a right to fix the terms on which he will ſhew mercy, which neither the will nor the power of man can alter, ver. 15, 16: and to withdraw his mercy from them, who like Pharaoh, will not comply with thoſe terms, ver. 17. And that accordingly *he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy*, namely, thoſe that truly believe: *and whom he will*, namely obſtinate unbelievers, he ſuffers to be *hardened*.

XXVIII. But *why then*, ſay the objectors, *doth he find fault* with thoſe that are hardened? *For who hath reſiſted his will?* ver. 19. To this inſolent miſconſtruction of what he had ſaid, the apoſtle firſt gives a ſevere rebuke, and then adds, *ſhall the thing formed ſay unto him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?* Why haſt thou made me capable of ſalvation only on thoſe terms? None indeed *hath reſiſted* this *will* of God, *he that believeth not, ſhall be damned*. But is this any ground for arraigning his juſtice? *Hath not* the great *potter power over his own clay? to make*, or appoint one ſort of *veſſels*, namely, believers, *to honour, and* the others *to diſhonour?* Hath he not a right to diſtribute eternal honour and diſhonour, on whatever terms he pleaſes? Eſpecially, conſidering the goodneſs and patience he ſhews, even towards them that believe not: conſidering

ſidering that when they have provoked him *to ſhew his wrath, and to make the power* of his vengeance *known, yet* he *endures with much long-ſuffering*, even thoſe *veſſels of wrath*, who had before *fitted* themſelves *to deſtruction*. There is then no more room to reply againſt God, for making his vengeance known on thoſe veſſels of wrath, than for *making known* his glorious love *on the veſſels of mercy whom he had before* by faith *prepared for glory: even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but alſo of the Gentiles.*

XXIX. I have ſpoken more largely than I deſigned, in order to ſhew, that neither our Lord, in the above mentioned parable, nor St. Paul, in theſe words, had any view to God's ſovereign power, as the ground of unconditional reprobation. And beware you go no further therein, than you are authorized by them. Take care, when you ſpeak of theſe high things, to *ſpeak as the oracles of God.* And if ſo, you will never ſpeak of the ſovereignty of God, but in conjunction with his other attributes. For the ſcripture no where ſpeaks of this ſingle attribute, as ſeparate from the reſt. Much leſs does it any where ſpeak of the ſovereignty of God, as ſingly diſpoſing the eternal ſtates of men. No, no: in this awful work, God proceeds according to the known rules of his juſtice and mercy. But never

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assign his sovereignty as the cause why any man is punished with everlasting destruction.

XXX. Now then, are you not quite out of your way? You are not in the way which God hath revealed. You are putting eternal happiness and misery, on an unscriptural, and a very dreadful footing. Make the case your own. Here are you, a sinner, convinced that you deserve the damnation of hell. Sorrow therefore and fear have filled your heart. And how shall you be comforted? By the promises of God? But perhaps you have no part therein; for they belong only to the elect. By the consideration of his love and tender mercy? But what are they to *you*, if you are a reprobate? God does not love *you* at all: *you*, like Esau, he hath hated even from eternity. What ground then can you have for the least shadow of hope? Why, it is *possible*, (that is all) that God's sovereign will may be on your side: *possibly*, God may save you, because he will! O poor encouragement to despairing sinners! I fear *faith* rarely *cometh by hearing* this!

XXXI. The sovereignty of God is then never to be brought to supersede his justice. And this is the present objection against unconditional reprobation (the plain consequence of unconditional election;) it flatly contradicts, indeed utterly overthrows the scripture-account of the justice of God. This has been proved in general already:

already: let us now weigh a few particulars. And *1. The ſcripture deſcribes God as the judge of the earth. But how ſhall God in juſtice judge the world, (O conſider this, as in the preſence of God, with reverence and godly fear!) How ſhall God in juſtice judge the world, if there be any decree of reprobation? On this ſuppoſition, what ſhould thoſe on the left-hand be condemned for? For their having done evil? They could not help it. There never was a time when they could have helped it. God, you ſay, *of old ordained* them *to this condemnation*. And *who hath reſiſted his will?* He *ſold* them, you ſay, *to work wickedneſs*, even from their mother's womb. He *gave them up to a reprobate mind*, or ever they *hung upon their mother's breaſt*. Shall he then condemn them for what they could not help? Shall the juſt, the holy one of Iſrael, adjudge millions of men to everlaſting pain, becauſe their blood moved in their veins? Nay this they might have helped by putting an end to their own lives. But could they even thus have eſcaped from ſin? Not without that grace which you ſuppoſe God had abſolutely determined never to give them. And yet you ſuppoſe him to ſend them into eternal fire, for not eſcaping from ſin! That is, in plain terms, for not having that grace, which God had decreed they ſhould never have! O ſtrange juſtice! What a picture do you draw of the Judge of all the earth?

XXXII.

XXXII. Are they not rather condemned, for not doing good, according to thoſe ſolemn words of the great Judge, *Depart, ye curſed—For I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat: I was thirſty and ye gave me no drink; a ſtranger, and ye took me not in: I was naked and ye cloathed me not; ſick and in priſon, and ye viſited me not. Then ſhall they anſwer*——But how much better an anſwer do you put into their mouths? *Upon *your* ſuppoſition, might they not ſay (O conſider it well in meekneſs and fear!) Lord, we might have done the outward work: but thou knoweſt, it would have but increaſed our damnation. We might have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirſty, and covered the naked with a garment. But all theſe works, without thy ſpecial grace, which we never had, nor poſſibly could have (ſeeing thou haſt eternally decreed to with-hold it from us) would only have been *ſplendid ſins*. They would only have heated the furnace of hell, ſeven times hotter than before. Upon *your* ſuppoſition, might they not ſay, "Righteous art thou, O Lord, yet let us plead with thee. O why doſt thou condemn us for not doing good? Was it poſſible for us, to do any thing well? Did we ever abuſe the power of doing good? We never received it, and that thou knoweſt. Wilt thou the Holy One, the juſt, condemn us for not doing, what we never had the power to do? Wilt thou condemn us for not caſting down the ſtars from

from heaven? For not holding the winds in our fiſt? Why it was as poſſible for us to do this, as to do any work acceptable in thy ſight! O Lord, correct us, but with judgment! And before thou plungeſt us into everlaſting fire, let us know, how it was ever poſſible for us to eſcape the damnation of hell."

XXXIII. Or how could they have eſcaped (ſuppoſe you aſſign that, as the cauſe of their condemnation) from inward ſin? From evil deſires? From unholy tempers and vile affections? Were they ever able to deliver their own ſouls? to reſcue themſelves from this inward hell? If ſo, their not doing it may juſtly be laid to their charge, and would leave them without excuſe. But it was not ſo: they never were able to deliver their own ſouls. They never had power to reſcue themſelves from the hands of thoſe boſom enemies. This talent was never put into their hands. How then can they be condemned, for hiding in the earth? for non-improvement of what they never had? Who is able to purify a corrupt heart; to bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Is man, mere man ſufficient for this? No certainly. God alone. To him only can the polluted of heart, ſay, *Lord, if thou wilt thou canſt make me clean.* But what if he anſwer, "I will not, becauſe I will not: be thou unclean ſtill." Will God doom that man to the bottomleſs pit, becauſe of that uncleanneſs, which

which he *could* not ſave himſelf from, and which God could have ſaved him from, but would not? Verily were an earthly king to execute ſuch juſtice as this upon his helpleſs ſubjects, it might well be expected that the vengeance of the Lord, would ſoon ſweep him from the face of the earth.

XXXIV. Perhaps you will ſay, they are not condemned for actual, but for original ſin. What do you mean by this term? The inward corruption of our nature? If ſo, it has been ſpoken of before. Or do you mean, the ſin which Adam committed in paradiſe? That this is imputed to all men, I allow; yea that by reaſon hereof, *the whole creation groaneth and travelleth in pain together until now.* But that any will be damned for this alone, I allow not, till you ſhew me where it is written. Bring me plain proof from ſcripture, and I ſubmit. But till then I utterly deny it.

XXXV. Should you not rather ſay, that unbelief is the damning ſin? And that thoſe who are condemned in that day, will be therefore condemned, *becauſe they believed not on the name of the only-begotten Son of* God? But *could* they believe? Was not this faith, both the gift and the work of God in the ſoul? And was it not a gift which he had eternally decreed, never to give them? Was it not a work which he was of old

old unchangeably determined, never to work in their ſouls? Shall theſe men then be condemned, becauſe God would not work; becauſe they did not receive what God would not give: could they "ungraſp the hold of his right hand, or force omnipotence?"

* XXXVI. There is, over and above, a peculiar difficulty here. You ſay, Chriſt did not die for thoſe men. But if ſo, there was an impoſſibility, in the very nature of the thing, that they ſhould ever ſavingly believe. For what is ſaving faith, but "a confidence in God thro' Chriſt that loved *me*, and gave himſelf for *me*?" Loved *thee*, thou reprobate! Gave himſelf for *thee?* Away! Thou haſt neither part nor lot herein. Thou believe in Chriſt, thou accurſed ſpirit! Damned or ever thou wert born! There never was any object for thy faith: there never was any thing for thee to believe. God himſelf (thus muſt you ſpeak, to be conſiſtent with yourſelf) with all his omnipotence, could not make thee believe Chriſt atoned for thy ſins, unleſs he had made thee believe a lie.

XXXVII. If then God be juſt, there cannot, on your ſcheme, be any judgment to come. We may add, nor any future ſtate, either of reward or puniſhment. If there be ſuch a ſtate, God will therein *render to every man according to his works. To them who by patient continuance in well-*

well-doing ſeek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but to them that do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, indignation, and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doeth evil.

* But how is this reconcileable with your ſcheme? You ſay, the reprobates cannot but do evil, and that the elect, from the day of God's power, cannot but continue in well-doing. You ſuppoſe all this is unchangeably decreed: in conſequence whereof, God acts irreſiſtibly on the one, and Satan on the other. Then, it is impoſſible for either one or the other, to *help acting* as they do; or rather, to help being *acted upon*, in the manner wherein they are. For if we ſpeak properly, neither the one nor the other can be ſaid to act at all. Can a ſtone be ſaid to act, when it is thrown out of a ſling? Or a ball, when it is projected from a cannon? No more can a man be ſaid to act, if he be only moved by a force he cannot reſiſt. But if the caſe be thus, you leave no room, either for reward or puniſhment. Shall the ſtone be rewarded, for riſing from the ſling, or puniſhed for falling down? Shall the cannon-ball be rewarded for flying towards the ſun, or puniſhed for receding from it? As incapable of either puniſhment or reward is the man, who is ſuppoſed to be impelled by a force he cannot reſiſt. Juſtice can have no place in rewarding or puniſhing mere machines, driven to and fro by an external force.

force. So that your ſuppoſition of God's ordaining from eternity whatſoever ſhould be done to the end of the world; as well as that of God's acting irreſiſtibly in the elect, and Satan's acting irreſiſtibly in the reprobates; utterly overthrows the ſcripture-doctrine of rewards and puniſhments, as well as of a judgment to come.

XXXVIII. Thus ill does that election which implies reprobation, agree with the ſcripture account of God's juſtice. And does it agree any better with his truth? How will you reconcile it with thoſe plain aſſertions (*Ezek* xviii. 23, &c.) *have I any pleaſure at all, that the wicked ſhould die, ſaith the Lord God? And not that he ſhould return from his ways and live? Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions whereby ye have tranſgreſſed—for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael? For I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth, ſaith the Lord: Wherefore turn yourſelves, and live ye.*

Ezek. xxxiii. 11, &c. *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael?*

XXXIX. But perhaps you will ſay, "Theſe ought to be limited and explained by other paſſages of ſcripture; wherein this doctrine is as clearly affirmed, as it is denied in theſe?" I

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muſt anſwer, very plain; if this were true, we muſt give up all the ſcriptures together: nor would the infidels allow the bible ſo honourable a title, as that of a *cunningly deviſed fable*. But it is not true. It has no colour of truth. It is abſolutely, notoriouſly falſe. To tear up the very roots of reprobation, and of all doctrines that have a neceſſary connexion therewith, God declares in his word theſe three things, and that explicitly, in ſo many terms, 1. *Chriſt died for all*, (2 Cor. v. 14.) namely, all that *were dead* in ſin, as the words immediately following fix the ſenſe: here is the fact affirmed. 2. *He is the propitiation for the ſins of the whole world*, (1 John ii. 2.) even of all thoſe for whom he died: here is the conſequence of his dying for all. And 3. *He died for all, that they ſhould not live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them*, (2 Cor. v. 15.) that they might be ſaved from their ſins: here is the deſign, the end of his dying for them. Now ſhew me the ſcriptures wherein God declares in equally expreſs terms, 1. *Chriſt did not die for all*, but for ſome only. 2. *Chriſt is not the propitiation for the ſins of the whole world*; and, 3. *He did not die for all*, at leaſt, not with that intent, *that they ſhould live unto him who died for them*. Shew me, I ſay, the ſcriptures that affirm theſe three things, in equally expreſs terms. You know, there are none. Nor is it poſſile to evade the force of thoſe above recited, but by ſupplying in number, what is wanting

ing in weight; by heaping abundance of texts together, whereby (though none of them ſpeak home to the point) the patrons of that opinion, dazzle the eyes of the unwary, and quite overlay the underſtanding both of themſelves, and thoſe that hear them.

XL. To proceed. What an account does this doctrine give, of the ſincerity of God in a thouſand declarations, ſuch as thoſe. *O that there were ſuch an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always! That it might be well with them, and with their children for ever*, Deut. v. 29. *My people would not hear my voice, and Iſrael would not obey me. So I gave them up unto their own heart's luſts, and let them follow their own imaginations. O that my people would have hearkened unto me! For if Iſrael had walked in my ways, I ſhould ſoon have put down their enemies, and turned my hand againſt their adverſaries*, Pſal. lxxxi. 12, &c. And all this time, you ſuppoſe God had unchangeably ordained, that there never ſhould be *ſuch an heart in them!* That it never ſhould be poſſible for the people whom he thus ſeemed to lament over, to *hearken unto him*, or to *walk in his ways!*

XLI. Our bleſſed Lord does indiſputably commend and invite *all men every where to repent.* He calleth all. He ſends his ambaſſadors, in his

his name, *To preach the gospel to every creature.* He himself *preached deliverance to the captives*, without any hint of restriction or limitation. But now, in what manner do you represent him, while he is employed in this work? You suppose him to be standing at the prison doors, having the keys thereof in his hands, and to be continually inviting the prisoners to come forth, commanding them to accept of that invitation, urging every motive which can possibly induce them to comply with that command; adding the most precious promises, if they obey, the most dreadful threatnings, if they obey not: and all this time you suppose him to be unalterably determined in himself, never to open the doors for them! Even while he is crying, *Come ye, come ye, from that evil place; for why will ye die, O house of Israel!* "Why! (might one of them reply) because we cannot help it. We *cannot* help ourselves? And thou *wilt* not help us. It is not in our power to break the gates of brass, and it is not thy pleasure to open them. Why *will* ye die? We must die: because it is not thy *will* to save us." Alas! my brethren! What kind of sincerity is this, which you ascribe to God our Saviour?

XLII. So ill do election and reprobation agree with the truth and sincerity of God. But do they not agree least of all, with the scriptural account of his love and goodness! That attribute which God peculiarly claims, where-

in he glories above all the reſt. It is not written, "God is juſtice, or God is truth," (although he is juſt and true in all his ways.) But it is written, God is love, love in the abſtract, without bounds; and *there is no end of his goodneſs.* His love extends even to thoſe who neither love nor fear him. He is good, even to the evil and the unthankful: yea, without any exception or limitation, to all the children of men. For *the Lord is loving* (or good) *to every man, and his mercy is over all his works.*

* But how is God good or loving to a reprobate, or one that is not *elected?* (You may chuſe either term; for if none but the unconditionally elect are ſaved, it comes preciſely to the ſame thing.) You cannot ſay, he is an object of the love or goodneſs of God, with regard to his eternal ſtate whom he created (ſays Mr. Calvin plainly and fairly) *in vitæ contumeliam et mortis exitium, to live a reproach, and die everlaſtingly.* Surely no one can dream, that the goodneſs of God is at all concerned with this man's eternal ſtate. "However God is good to him in this world," What! when by reaſon of God's unchangeable decree, it had been good for this man, never to have been born? When his very birth was a curſe, not a bleſſing? "Well, but he now enjoys many of the gifts of God, both gifts of nature and of providence. He has food and raiment, and comforts of various kinds. And are not all theſe great bleſſings?" No not to him.

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At the price he is to pay for them, every one of theſe alſo is a curſe. Every one of theſe comforts, is by an eternal decree, to coſt him a thouſand pangs in hell. For every moment's pleaſure which he now enjoys, he is to ſuffer the torments of more than a thouſand years: for the ſmoke of that pit which is preparing for him, aſcendeth up for ever and ever. God knew this would be the fruit of whatever he ſhould enjoy, before the vapour of life fled away. He deſigned it ſhould. It was his very purpoſe, in giving him thoſe enjoyments. So that by all theſe (according to your account) he is in truth and reality, only fatting the ox for the ſlaughter. "Nay, but God gives him grace too." Yes; but what kind of grace? *Saving grace*, you own, he has none: none of a ſaving nature. And the common grace he has, was not given with any deſign to ſave his ſoul: nor with any deſign to do him any good at all; but only to reſtrain him from hurting the elect. So far from doing him good, that this grace alſo neceſſarily increaſes his damnation. And God knows this, you ſay; and deſigned it ſhould: it was one great end for which he gave it! Then I deſire to know, how is God good or loving to this man? Either with regard to time or eternity?

XLIII. * Let us ſuppoſe a particular inſtance. Here ſtands a man, who is reprobated from all eternity; or, if you would expreſs it more

 ſmoothly,

ſmoothly, one who is not elected, whom God eternally decreed to paſs by. Thou haſt nothing therefore to expect from God after death, but to be caſt into the lake of fire burning with brimſtone: God having conſigned thy unborn ſoul to hell, by a decree which cannot paſs away. And form the time thou waſt born under the irrevocable curſe of God, thou canſt have no peace. For there is no peace to the wicked, and ſuch thou art doomed to continue, even from thy mother's womb. Accordingly God giveth thee of this world's goods, on purpoſe to inhance thy damnation. He giveth thee now ſubſtance or friends, in order hereafter to heap the more coals of fire upon thy head. He filleth thee with food, he maketh thee fat and well liking, to make thee a more ſpecious ſacrifice to his vengeance. Good-nature, generoſity, a good underſtanding, various knowledge it may be, or eloquence, are the flowers wherewith he adorneth thee, thou poor victim, before thou art brought to the ſlaughter. Thou haſt grace too! but what grace? Not ſaving grace. That is not for thee but for the elect only. Thine may properly be termed damning grace; ſince it is not only ſuch in the event, but in the intention. Thou receiveſt it of God for that very end, that thou migheſt receive the greater damnation. It was given not to convert thee, but only to convince; not to make thee without ſin, but without excuſe; not to deſtroy, but to arm the worm that never dieth, and to blow up the fire that never ſhall be quenched.

XLIV. Now I beſeech you to conſider calmly, how is God good or loving to this man? Is not this ſuch love as makes your blood run cold? As cauſes the ears of him that heareth to tingle? And can you believe, there is that man on earth or in hell, who can truly tell God, "Thus haſt thou done?" Can you think, that the loving, the merciful God ever dealt thus with any ſoul which he hath made? But you muſt, and do believe this, if you believe unconditional election. For it holds reprobation in its boſom: they never were, never can be divided. Take then your choice. If for the ſake of election you will ſwallow reprobation, well. But if you cannot digeſt this, you muſt neceſſarily give up unconditional election.

XLVI. "But you cannot do this: for then you ſhould be called a Pelagian, an Arminian, and what not?" And are you afraid of hard names? Then you have not begun to be a diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt. "No, that is not the caſe. But you are afraid, if you do not hold election, you muſt hold free-will, and ſo rob God of his glory in man's ſalvation."

I anſwer, 1. Many of the greateſt maintainers of election, utterly deny the conſequence, and do not allow, that even *natural* free-will in man, is repugnant to God's glory. Theſe accordingly aſſert, that every man living has a meaſure of natural free-will. So the *aſſembly* of divines (and

therein the body of Calviniſts both in England and Scotland) " God hath endued the will of man with that *natural liberty*, that is neither forced, nor, by an abſolute neceſſity of nature, determined to do good or evil :" (chap. ix.) And this they aſſert of man in his fallen ſtate, even before he receives the grace of God.

But I do not carry free-will ſo far ; (I mean not in moral things) *natural free-will*, in the preſent ſtate of mankind, I do not underſtand, I only aſſert, that there is a meaſure of free-will *ſupernaturally* reſtored to every man, together with that *ſupernatural* light, which *enlightens every man that cometh into the world.* But indeed, whether this be natural or no, as to your objection it matters not. For that equally lies againſt both, againſt any free-will of any kind : your aſſertion being thus, " If man has any free-will, God cannot have the whole glory of his ſalvation." Or, " It is not ſo much for the glory of God, to ſave man as a free-agent, put into a capacity of concurring with his grace on the one hand, and of reſiſting it on the other : as to ſave him in the way of a neceſſary agent, by a power which he cannot poſſibly reſiſt."

XLVI. With regard to the former of theſe aſſertions, " If man has any free-will, then God cannot have the whole glory of his ſalvation," is your meaning this : " If man has any power to *work out his own ſalvation*, then God cannot have

have the whole glory? If it be, I muſt aſk again, what do you mean, by God's "having the whole glory?" Do you mean, "his doing the whole work, without any concurrence on man's part?" If ſo, your aſſertion is, "If man do at all *work together with* God, in *working out his own ſalvation*, then God does not do the whole work, without man's *working together with him*." Moſt true, moſt ſure: but cannot you ſee, how God nevertheleſs may have all the glory? Why the very power to *work together with him*, was from God. Therefore to him is all the glory. Has not even experience taught you this? Have you not often felt, in a particular temptation, power either to reſiſt or yield to the grace of God? And when you have yielded to work together with him, did you not find it very poſſible notwithſtanding, to give him all the glory? So that both experience and ſcripture are againſt you here, and make it clear to every impartial inquirer, that though man has *freedom* to work or not *work together with* God, yet may God have the whole glory of his ſalvation.

XLVII. If then you ſay, "we aſcribe to God alone, the whole glory of our ſalvation." I anſwer, So do we too. If you add, "Nay, but we affirm, that God alone does the whole work, without man's working at all;" in one ſenſe, we allow this alſo. We allow, it is the work of

God alone, to juſtify, to ſanctify, and to glorify, which three comprehend the whole of ſalvation. Yet we cannot allow, that man can only reſiſt, and not in any wiſe *work together with* God: or, that God is ſo the whole worker of our ſalvation, as to exclude man's working at all. This I dare not ſay: for I cannot prove it by ſcripture: nay, it is flatly contrary thereto: for the ſcripture is expreſs, that (having received power from God) we are to *work out our own ſalvation:* and that (after the work of God is begun in our ſouls) we are *workers together with him.*

XLVIII. Your objection propoſed in another from, is this: "It is not ſo much for the glory of God, to ſave man as a free-agent, put into a capacity of either concurring with, or reſiſting his grace; as to ſave him in the way of a neceſſary agent, by a power which he cannot poſſibly reſiſt."

O that the Lord would anſwer for himſelf! That he would ariſe and maintain his own cauſe! That he would no longer ſuffer his ſervants, few as they are, to weaken one another's hands, and to be wearied not only with *the contradiction of ſinners*, but even of thoſe who are in a meaſure ſaved from ſin! *Wo is me that I am conſtrained to dwell with Meſheck! Among them that are enemies to peace! I labour for peace: but when I ſpeak thereof,*

thereof, they ſtill make themſelves ready for battle.

XLIX. * If it muſt be then, let us look one another in the face. How is it more for the glory of God, to ſave man irreſiſtibly, than to ſave him as a free-agent, by ſuch grace as he may either concur with or reſiſt? I fear you have a confuſed, unſcriptural notion of "the glory of God." What do you mean by that expreſſion? The glory of God, ſtrictly ſpeaking is his glorious eſſence and his attributes, which have been ever of old. And this glory admits of no increaſe, being the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever. But the ſcripture frequently ſpeaks of the glory of God, in a ſenſe ſomething different from this: meaning thereby, the manifeſtation of his eſſential glory, of his eternal power and godhead, and of his glorious attributes, more eſpecially his juſtice, mercy, and truth. And it is in this ſenſe alone, that the glory of God, is ſaid to be advanced by man. Now then this is the point which it lies on you to prove, "that it does more eminently manifeſt the glorious attributes of God, more eſpecially his juſtice, mercy, and truth, to ſave man irreſiſtibly, than to ſave him by ſuch grace as it is in his power either to concur with, or to reſiſt."

L. But you muſt not imagine, I will be ſo unwiſe, as to engage you here on this ſingle

point. I ſhall not now diſpute (which yet might be done) whether ſalvation by irreſiſtible grace (which indeed makes man a mere machine and conſequently no more rewardable than puniſhable) whether I ſay, ſalvation by irreſiſtible grace conſidered apart from its conſequences, manifeſt the glory of God more or leſs, than ſalvation by grace which may be reſiſted. Not ſo: (but by the aſſiſtance of God) I ſhall take your whole ſcheme together; irreſiſtible grace for the elect, implying the denial of ſaving grace to all others: or unconditional election with its inſeparable companion, unconditional reprobation

The caſe is clearly this. You may drive me, on the one hand, unleſs I will contradict myſelf or retract my principles, to own a meaſure of free-will in every man (tho' not by nature, as the aſſembly of divines.) And on the other hand, I can drive you, and every aſſertor of unconditional election, unleſs you will contradict yourſelf, or retract your principles, to own unconditional reprobation.

Stand forth then, free-will, on the one ſide, and reprobation on the other. And let us ſee, whether the one ſcheme attended with the abſurdity (as you think it) of free-will; or the other ſcheme, attended with the abſurdity of reprobation, be the more defenſible. Let us ſee (if it pleaſe the Father of lights, to open the eyes of our underſtanding) which of theſe is more for

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the glory of God, for the display of his glorious attributes, for the manifestation of his wisdom, justice and mercy to the sons of men.

LI. First, his wisdom. If man be in some measure free, if by that light which *lighteth every man that comes into the world*, there be *set before him life and death, good and evil*; then how gloriously does the manifold wisdom of God appear in the whole œconomy of man's salvation? * Being willing that all men should be saved, yet not willing to force them thereto; willing that men should be saved, yet not as trees or stones, but as men, as reasonable creatures, endued with understanding to discern what is good, and liberty either to accept or refuse it: how does he suit the whole scheme of his dispensations to this his προθεσις, his plan, *the counsel of his will?* His first step is, to enlighten the understanding, by that general knowledge of good and evil. To this he adds many secret reproofs, if they act contrary to this light: many inward convictions, which there is not a man on earth who has not often felt. At other times he gently moves their wills, he draws and wooes them (as it were) to walk in the light. He instils into their hearts good desires, though perhaps they know not from whence they come. Thus far he proceeds with all the children of men, yea even with those who have not the knowledge of his written word. But in this, what a field of wisdom is displayed, suppose man

to be in some degree a free agent? How is every part of it suited to this end? To save man, as man; to set life and death before him, and then persuade (not force) him to chuse life: According to this grand purpose of God, a perfect rule is first set before him, to serve as a *lantern to his feet, and a light in all his paths.* This is offered to him in a form of a law, inforced with the strongest sanctions, the most glorious rewards for them that obey, the severest penalties on them that break it. To reclaim these, God uses all manner of ways; he tries every avenue of their souls. He applies sometimes to their understanding, shewing them the folly of their sins: sometimes to their affections, tenderly expostulating with them for their ingratitude, and even condescending to ask, *what could I have done for* you (consistent with my eternal purpose, not to force you) *which I have not done?* He intermixes, sometimes threats, *except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish:* sometimes promises, *your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more.* * Now what wisdom is seen in all this, if man may indeed chuse life or death? But if every man be unalterably consigned to heaven or hell, before he comes from his mother's womb, where is the wisdom of this; of dealing with him in every respect, *as if* he were *free*, when it is no such thing? What avails, what can this whole dispensation of God avail a reprobate? What are promises or threats,

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expoſtulations or reproofs to thee, thou firebrand of hell? What indeed (O my brethren, ſuffer me to ſpeak, for I am full of matter) but empty force, but mere grimace, ſounding words, that mean juſt nothing? O where (to wave all other conſiderations now) is the wiſdom of this proceeding? To what end does all this apparatus ſerve? If you ſay, to inſure his damnation: alas, what needeth that? Seeing this was inſured before the foundation of the world. Let all mankind then judge, which of theſe accounts is more for the glory of God's wiſdom!

LII. * We come next to his juſtice. Now if man be capable of chuſing good or evil, then he is a proper object of the juſtice of God, acquiting or condemning, rewarding or puniſhing. But otherwiſe he is not. A mere machine is not capable of being either acquitted or condemned. Juſtice cannot puniſh a ſtone for falling to the ground: nor (on your ſcheme) a man for falling into ſin. For he can no more help it than the ſtone, if he be (in your ſenſe) *fore-ordained to this condemnation.* Why does this man ſin? "He cannot ceaſe from ſin?" Why cannot he ceaſe from ſin? "Becauſe he has no ſaving grace?" Why has he no ſaving grace? "Becauſe God of his own good pleaſure, hath eternally decreed, not to give it him." Is he then under an unavoidable neceſſity of ſinning? "Yes: as much as a ſtone is of falling. He never had

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any more power to ceaſe from evil, than a ſtone has to hang in the air." And ſhall this man, for not doing what he never could do, and for doing what he never could avoid, be ſentenced to depart into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels? "Yes, becauſe it is the ſovereign will of God."——Then "you have either found a new God, or *made* one!" This is not the God of the Chriſtians. Our God is juſt in all his ways: he reapeth not where he hath not ſtrewed. He requireth only according to what he hath given: and where he hath given little, little is required. The glory of his juſtice is this, to *reward every man according to his works*. Hereby is that glorious attribute ſhewn, evidently ſet forth before men and angels, in that it is accepted of every man according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not. This is that juſt decree which cannot paſs, either in time or in eternity.

Thus one ſcheme gives the juſtice of God its full ſcope, leaves room for it to be largely diſplayed in all its branches: whereas the other makes it a mere ſhadow, yea, brings it abſolutely to nothing.

LIII. Juſt as glorioufly does it diſplay his love! ſuppoſing it to be fixt on one in ten of his creatures, (might I not rather ſay, one in an hundred?) and to have no regard to the reſt. Let the ninety and nine reprobates periſh without mercy.

mercy. It is enough for him, to love and save the one elect. But why will he have mercy on these alone, and leave all those to inevitable destruction? "He will—because he will!" O that God would give unto you who thus speak, meekness of wisdom! Then would I ask, What would the universal voice of mankind pronounce of the man that should act thus? That being able to deliver millions of men from death, with a single breath of his mouth, should refuse to save any more than one in an hundred, and say, "I will not, because I will not." How then do you exalt the mercy of God, when you ascribe such a proceeding to him? What a strange comment is this on his own word, that *his mercy is over all his works!*

* Do you think to evade this by saying, "his mercy is more displayed, in irresistibly saving the elect, than it would be in giving the choice of salvation to all men, and actual salvation to those that accepted it?" How so? Make this appear if you can. What proof do you bring of this assertion? I appeal to every impartial mind, whether the reverse be not obviously true? Whether the mercy of God would not be far less gloriously displayed, in saving a few by his irresistible power, and leaving all the rest without help, without hope, to perish everlastingly, than in offering salvation to every creature, actually saving all that consent thereto, and doing for the rest all that infinite wisdom, almighty power, and boundless love can do, without *forcing* them to

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be faved, which would be to deſtroy the very nature that he had given them. I appeal, I ſay, to every impartial mind, and to your own, if not quite blinded with prejudice, which of theſe accounts places the mercy of God in the moſt advantageous light.

LIV. Perhaps you will ſay, " But there are other attributes of God, namely, his ſovereignty, unchangeableneſs, and faithfulneſs. I hope you do not deny theſe." I anſwer, No; by no means. The ſovereignty of God appears, 1. In fixing from eternity that decree touching the ſons of men, *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved: he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* 2. In all the general circumſtances of creation; in the time, the place, the manner of creating all things: in appointing the number and kinds of creatures, viſible and inviſible. 3. In alloting the natural endowments of men, theſe to one, and thoſe to another. 4. In diſpoſing the time, place, and other outward circumſtances (as parents, relations) attending the birth of every one. 5. In diſpenſing the various gifts of his Spirit, for the edification of his church. 6. In ordering all temporal things, (as health, fortune, friends) every thing ſhort of eternity. But in diſpoſing the eternal ſtates of men, (allowing only what was obſerved under the firſt article) it is clear, that not ſovereignty alone, but juſtice, mercy, and truth hold the reins. The governor of heaven and earth,

earth, the I AM, over all, God bleſſed for ever, takes no ſtep here but as theſe direct, and prepare the way before his face. This is his eternal and irreſiſtible will, as he hath revealed unto us by his Spirit; declaring in the ſtrongeſt terms, adding his oath to his word, and becauſe he could ſwear by no greater, ſwearing by himſelf, *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth.* The death of him that dieth can never be reſolved into my pleaſure or ſovereign will. No; it is impoſſible. We challenge all mankind, to bring one clear, ſcriptural proof to the contrary. You can bring no ſcripture proof that God ever did, or aſſertion that he ever will, act as *mere ſovereign* in eternally condemning any ſoul that ever was, or will be born into the world.

LV. Now, you are probably thinking of Eſau and Pharaoh. Do you then ſet it down as an unqueſtionable truth, that theſe were eternally condemned by the *mere ſovereign* will of God? Are you ſure, that they were eternally condemned? Even that point is not altogether certain. It is no where aſſerted in holy writ: and it would coſt you ſome pains to prove it. It is true, Pharaoh's death was a puniſhment from God: but it does not follow, that he was puniſhed everlaſtingly. And if he was, it was not by the *mere ſovereign will of God*, but becauſe of his own ſtubbornneſs and impenitence.

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Of this Moſes has given us a particular account: accordingly we read, *When Pharaoh ſaw that there was reſpite* (after he was delivered from the plague of frogs) *he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them*, (Exod. viii. 13.) So after the plague of flies, *Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time alſo, neither would he let the people go*, (ver. 32.) Again, *When Pharaoh ſaw that the rain and the hail were ceaſed, he ſinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his ſervants*, (Exod. ix. 34.) After God had given him all this ſpace to repent, and had expoſtulated with him for his obſtinate impenitence in thoſe ſolemn words, *How long wilt thou refuſe to humble thyſelf before me?* (chap. x. 3.) What wonder is it, if God then *hardened his heart*, that is, permitted Satan to harden it? If he at length wholly withdrew his ſoftening grace, and *gave him up to a reprobate mind?*

LVI. The caſe of Eſau is widely different from this: although his conduct alſo is blameable in many points. The firſt was, the ſelling his birth-right to Jacob, (Gen. xxv. 31, &c.) The next, his marrying againſt his father's conſent, (chap. xxvi. 34, 35.) But it is highly probable he was ſenſible of his fault; becauſe Iſaac appears to have been fully reconciled to him, when he ſaid, *My ſon, make me ſavoury meat, that my ſoul may bleſs thee before I die*, Gen. xxvii. 4.

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In the following verſes we have an account of the manner wherein he was ſupplanted by his brother Jacob. Upon Iſaac's relation of this, *Eſau cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry*, (ver. 34.) *and ſaid unto his father, Bleſs me, even me alſo, O my father!* But *he found no place*, ſays the apoſtle, *for repentance*, for recovering the bleſſing, *though he ſought it carefully with tears. Thy brother*, ſaid Iſaac, *hath taken away thy bleſſing: I have bleſſed him, yea, and he ſhall be bleſſed.* So that all Eſau's ſorrow and tears could not recover his birth-right, and the bleſſing annexed thereto.

And yet there is great reaſon to hope, that Eſau (as well as Jacob) is now in Abraham's boſom. For although for a time *he hated Jacob*, and afterward came againſt him *with four hundred men*, very probably deſigning to take revenge for the injuries he had ſuſtained; yet we find, when they met, *Eſau ran and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kiſſed him.* So throughly had God changed his heart. And why ſhould we doubt but that happy change continued?

LVII. You can ground no ſolid objection to this, on St. Paul's words in the epiſtle to the Romans: *It was ſaid unto her, the elder ſhall ſerve the younger: as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Eſau have I hated*, chap. ix. 12, 13. For it is undeniably plain, that both theſe ſcriptures relate

relate not to the perſons of Jacob and Eſau, but to their deſcendants; the Iſraelites ſprung from Jacob, and the Edomites ſprung from Eſau. In this ſenſe only did *the elder* (Eſau) *ſerve the younger*; not in his perſon, (for Eſau never ſerved Jacob) but in his poſterity. The poſterity of the elder brother ſerved the poſterity of the younger.

The other text referred to by the apoſtle, runs thus: *I loved Jacob, and I hated Eſau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waſte for the dragons of the wilderneſs*, Mal. i. 2. Whoſe heritage was it that God laid waſte? Not that which Eſau perſonally enjoyed: but that of his poſterity, the Edomites, for their enormous ſins, largely deſcribed by ſeveral of the prophets. So neither here is there any inſtance of any man being finally condemned by the *mere ſovereign* will of God.

LVIII. * *The unchangeableneſs* of God we allow likewiſe. *In him is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning*. But you ſeem to lie under a miſtake concerning this alſo, for want of obſerving the ſcripture-account of it. The ſcripture teaches, 1. That God is unchangeable with regard to his decrees. But what decrees? The ſame that he has commanded to be *preached to every creature*. "*He that believeth ſhall be ſaved: he that believeth not ſhall be damned.*" The ſcripture

ture teaches, 2. That God is unchangeable with regard to his love and hatred. But how? Obſerve this well; for it is your grand miſtake, and the root of almoſt all the reſt. God unchangeably loveth righteouſneſs, and hateth iniquity. Unchangeably he loveth faith, and unchangeably hateth unbelief. In conſequence hereof he unchangeably loves the righteous, and hateth the workers of iniquity. He unchangeably loves them that believe, and hates wilful, obſtinate unbelievers. So that the ſcripture-account of God's unchangeableneſs with regard to his *decrees*, is this: He has unchangeably decreed to ſave holy believers, and to condemn obſtinate, impenitent unbelievers. And according to ſcripture, his unchangeableneſs of *affection*, properly and primarily regards tempers and not perſons: and perſons (as Enoch, Noah, Abraham) only as thoſe tempers are found in them. Let then the unchangeableneſs of God be put upon the right foot, let the ſcripture be allowed to fix the objects of it, and it will as ſoon prove tranſubſtantiation, as unconditional election.

LIX. The *faithfulneſs* of God may be termed a branch of his truth. He *will perform* what he *hath promiſed*. But then let us enquire of the oracles of God, to whom are the promiſes made? The promiſes of life and immortality? The anſwer is, *To Abraham and his ſeed*, that is, to thoſe who

who *walk in the ſteps of the faith of their father Abraham.* To thoſe who believe, as believers, are the goſpel-promiſes made. To theſe hath the faithful God engaged, that he will do what he hath ſpoken. *He will fulfil his covenant and promiſe which he hath made to a thouſand generations:* the ſum of which is, (as we find it expreſly declared by the Spirit of God) *the Lord will give grace,* (more grace) *and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them that live a godly life.*

LX. This covenant of God I underſtand: but I have heard of another which I underſtand not. I have heard, "that God the Father made a covenant with his Son, before the world began, wherein the Son agreed to ſuffer ſuch and ſuch things, and the Father to give him ſuch and ſuch ſouls for a recompence: that in conſequence of this, thoſe ſouls *muſt* be ſaved, and thoſe only, ſo that all others *muſt* be damned." I beſeech you, where is this written? In what part of ſcripture is this covenant to be found? We may well expect a thing of this moment to be revealed very expreſly, with the utmoſt clearneſs and ſolemnity. But where is this done? And if it is not done, if there is no ſuch account in all the bible; which ſhall we wonder at moſt, that any ſerious man ſhould advance, or that thouſands ſhould believe, ſo ſtrange an aſſertion, without

without one plain text of ſcripture to ſupport it, from Geneſis to the Revelation?

LXI. I ſuppoſe you do not imagine, that the bare word *covenant*, if it occurred ever ſo often in holy writ, is a proof of any ſuch covenant as this. The grand covenant which we allow to be mentioned therein, is a covenant between God and man, eſtabliſhed in the hands of a Mediator, *who taſted death for every man*, and thereby purchaſed it for all the children of men. The tenor of it (ſo often mentioned already) is this, "Whoſoever believeth unto the end, ſo as to ſhew his faith by his works, I the Lord will reward that ſoul eternally. But whoſoever will not believe, and conſequently dieth in his ſins, I will puniſh him with everlaſting deſtruction?"

LXII. To examine throughly whether this covenant between God and man be unconditional or conditional, it may be needful to go back as far as Abraham, the father of the faithful: to enquire what manner of covenant it was, which God made with him? And whether any reaſon be aſſigned, of God's peculiarly bleſſing Abraham, and all the nations of the earth in him?

The firſt mention of the covenant between God and him, occurs Gen. xv. 18. *The ſame day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, ſaying, unto thy ſeed will I give this land.* But this is much

much more explicitly related in the feventeenth chapter, ver. 1, &c. *The Lord appeared unto Abram, and ſaid unto him, I am the almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, ſaying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou ſhalt be a father of many nations. Neither ſhall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name ſhall be Abraham: for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, for an everlaſting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee — Every man-child among you ſhall be circumciſed—it ſhall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you—The uncircumciſed man-child ſhall be cut off; he hath broken my covenant.* So we ſee, this original covenant, though *everlaſting*, was conditional, and man's failing in the condition cleared God.

LXIII. We have St. Paul's account of this covenant of God with Abraham, in the fourth chapter of his epiſtle to the Romans (ver. 3, &c.) *Abraham*, ſaith he, *believed God, and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs.* (This was a little before God eſtabliſhed his covenant with him, and is related Gen. xv. 6.) *And he received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith which he had yet being uncircumciſed, that he might*

might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: and the father of circumcision (i. e. of them that are circumcised) *to them who are not of the circumcision only, but also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.* Now, if these words do not express a conditional covenant, certainly none can.

LXIV. The nature and ground of this covenant of God with Abraham is farther explained, Gen. xviii. 19. *And the Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, seeing all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him: and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring unto Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

Does God say here, *I will* do it, because *I will?* Nothing less. The reason is explicitly assigned: *All nations shall be blessed in him: For he will command his children, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.*

The reason is yet more (clearly, it cannot, but more) fully set down in the twenty second chapter (ver. 16, &c.)

By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, BECAUSE *thou hast done this thing, and hast not with-held thy son, thine only son: that in blessing*

I will bleſs thee—and in thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed; that is, the Meſſiah ſhall ſpring from thee, BECAUSE *thou haſt obeyed my voice.*

This is yet again declared, chap. xxvi. (ver. 2, &c.) *And the Lord appeared unto Iſaac, and ſaid —Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and bleſs thee: for unto thee, and unto thy ſeed I will perform the oath which I ſware unto Abraham thy father. In thy ſeed ſhall all nations of the earth be bleſſed: Becauſe that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my ſtatutes, and my laws.*

LXV. This covenant made to Abraham and his ſeed, is mentioned again Exod. xix. (ver. 3, &c.) *And the Lord called unto Moſes, ſaying, Thus ſhalt thou ſay to the houſe of Jacob, and tell the children of Iſrael, ye have ſeen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles wings, and brought you unto myſelf. Now therefore,* IF *ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye ſhall be a peculiar treaſure unto me above all people.*

In the following chapter God declares the terms of the covenant they were to keep, in ten commandments. And theſe themſelves are ſometimes termed *the covenant*, ſometimes *the book of the covenant.* So chap. xxiv. (ver. 4, &c.) after God had made an end of ſpeaking to the people, it is ſaid, *And Moſes wrote all the words of the Lord, and*

and rose up early in the morning—and he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, all that the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses took the blood (of the burnt-offering) *and sprinked it on the people, and said, behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.*

After the people had broken this covenant by worshipping the golden calf, God renews it, chap. xxxiv. where we read, (ver. 27, 28.) *And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words, for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel—and he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.*

LXVI. According to the tenor of this covenant made to Abraham and his seed, God afterward declares, (Levit. xxvi. 3, &c.) *If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them, then I will establish my covenant with you, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people—But if ye will not hearken unto me, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant, I will set my face against you, and I will avenge the quarrel of my covenant—yet if they shall confess their iniquity, and if their uncircumcised hearts be humbled—then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember.*

ber. Consequently the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was conditional, as well as that with their posterity.

LXVII. "But is not the faithfulness of God engaged to keep all that now believe from falling away?" I cannot say that. Whatever assurance God may give to particular souls, I find no general promise in holy writ, "That none who once believes shall finally fall." Yet, to say the truth, this is so pleasing an opinion, so agreeable to flesh and blood, so suitable to whatever of nature remains, in those who have tasted the grace of God, that I see nothing but the mighty power of God, which can restrain any who hears it from closing with it. But still it wants one thing to recommend it, plain, cogent scripture-proof.

Arguments from experience alone will never determine this point. They can only prove thus much, on the one hand, that our Lord is exceeding patient, that he is peculiarly unwilling any believer should perish; that he bears long, very long with all their follies, waiting to be gracious, and to heal their backsliding; and that he does actually bring back many lost sheep who, to man's apprehensions were irrecoverable: but all this does not amount to a convincing proof, that no believer can or does fall from grace. So that this argument, from experience, will weigh little with those who believe the possibility of falling.

And

And it will weigh full as little with thoſe who do not. For if you produce ever ſo many examples of thoſe who were once ſtrong in faith, and are now more abandoned than ever, they will evade it by ſaying, "O, but they will be brought back; they will not die in their ſins." And if they do die in their ſins, we come no nearer; we have not gained one point ſtill. For it is eaſy to ſay, "They were only hypocrites; they never had true faith." Therefore ſcripture alone can determine this queſtion. And ſcripture does ſo fully determine it, that there needs only to ſet down a very few texts, with ſome ſhort reflections upon them.

LXVIII. That one who is a true believer, or, in other words, one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himſelf, may nevertheleſs finally fall from grace, appears 1. From the word of God by Ezekiel, (chap. xviii. 24.) *When the righteous turneth away from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity, in his treſpaſs that he hath treſpaſſed, and in his ſin that he hath ſinned, in them ſhall he die.*

Do you object,† "This chapter relates wholly and ſolely to the Jewiſh church and nation?" I anſwer, prove this: till then I ſhall believe that many parts of it concern all mankind.

If you ſay, 2. "The righteouſneſs ſpoken of

† See a pamphlet, intitled, *The doctrine of the ſaint's final perſeverance, aſſerted and vindicated.*

in this chapter, was merely an outward righteouſneſs, without any inward principle of grace or holineſs:" I aſk, how is this conſiſtent with the 31ſt verſe, *Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions whereby ye have tranſgreſſed, and make you a new heart, and a new ſpirit?* Is this a "merely outward righteouſneſs, without any inward principle of grace or holineſs?"

Will you add, "But admitting the perſon here ſpoken of, to be a truly righteous man, what is here ſaid is only a ſuppoſition." That I flatly deny. Read over the chapter again, and you will ſee the facts there laid down, to be not barely *ſuppoſed*, but expreſly *aſſerted*.

That the death here mentioned is eternal death, appears from the 26th verſe.

When a righteous man turneth away from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them (here is temporal death) *for his iniquity that he hath done he ſhall die.* Here is death eternal.

If you aſſert, "Both theſe expreſſions ſignify the ſame thing, and not two different deaths:" you put a palpable force upon the text, in order to make the Holy Ghoſt ſpeak nonſenſe.

"Dying *in his iniquity* (you ſay) is the ſame thing as dying *for his iniquity*." Then the text means thus, "When he dieth in them, he ſhall did in them." A very deep diſcovery!

But you ſay, "It cannot be underſtood of eternal death; *becauſe* they might be delivered from

from it by repentance and reformation." And why might they not by such repentance as is mentioned in the 31st verse, be delivered from eternal death?

But "the whole chapter, you think has nothing to do with the spiritual and eternal affairs of men."

I believe every impartial man will think quite the contrary, if he reads calmly either the beginning of it: *All souls are mine, saith the Lord God; the soul that sinneth, it shall die*; (where I can by no means allow that by the death of the soul is meant only a temporal affliction:") or the conclusion, *Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart, and a new spirit, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

It remains then, one who is righteous in the judgment of God himself, may finally fall from grace.

LXIX. Secondly, That one who is endued with the faith, which produces a good conscience, may nevertheless finally fall, appears from the words of St. *Paul* to *Timothy* (1 Tim. i. 18, 19.) *War a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck.*

Obſerve 1. Theſe men had once the faith that produces *a good conſcience*, which they once had, or they could not have *put it away*.

Obſerve 2. They *made ſhipwreck* of the faith, which neceſſarily implies the total and final loſs of it.

You object, "Nay, the *putting away* a good "conſcience does not ſuppoſe they had it but "rather that they had it not."

This is really ſurprizing. But how do you prove it? "Why, by *Acts* xiii. 46. where St. "*Paul* ſays to the Jews, *It was neceſſary that the* "*word of God ſhould firſt have been ſpoken to you.* "*But ſeeing ye put it from you—lo, we turn to the* "*Gentiles.*" Here you ſee the Jews, who never had the goſpel, are ſaid to *put it away*.

How! Are you ſure they, "never had what they are here ſaid *to put away?*" Not ſo. What they put away, it is undeniable they had, till they *put it away:* namely, *the word of God ſpoken* by Paul and Barnabas. This inſtance therefore makes full againſt you. It proves juſt the reverſe of what you cited it for.

But you object further, "men may have *a good conſcience* in ſome ſenſe, without true faith."

I grant it, in a reſtrained, limited ſenſe; but not *a good conſcience*, ſimply and abſolutely ſpeaking. But ſuch is that of which the apoſtle here ſpeaks, and which he exhorts Timothy *to hold faſt*. Unleſs you apprehend, that the *holding it faſt* likewiſe "rather ſuppoſes he never had it."

"But

" But the faith here mentioned means only the doctrine of faith." I want better proof of this.

It remains then, one who has the faith which produces a good conscience, may yet finally fall.

LXX. Thirdly, Those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible church, may nevertheless finally fall.

For thus saith the apostle, *Some of the branches are broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree. Be not high-minded, but fear: if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God! On them which fell, severity, but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off.* Rom. xi. 17, &c.

We may observe here, 1. The persons spoken to, were actually engrafted into the olive-tree:

2. This olive-tree is not barely the outward, visible church, but the invisible, consisting of holy believers. So the text. *If the first fruit be holy, the lump is holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.* And, *because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.*

3. Those holy believers were still liable to be cut off from the invisible church, into which they were then grafted.

4. Here is not the leaſt intimation of their being ever grafted in again.

To this you object, 1. "This olive-tree is not the inviſible church, but only the outward goſpel church-ſtate." You affirm this; and I prove the contrary: namely, that it is the inviſible church: for it "conſiſts of holy believers," which none but the inviſible church does.

You object, 2, "The Jews who were broken "off, were never true believers in Chriſt."

I am not ſpeaking of the Jews, but of thoſe *Gentiles* who are mentioned in the 22d verſe: whom St. Paul exhorts to *continue in his goodneſs*; otherwiſe, ſaith he, *thou ſhalt be cut off*. Now, I preſume, theſe were true believers in Chriſt. Yet they were ſtill liable to be cut off.

You aſſert, 3. "This is only a cutting off, from "the outward church-ſtate." But how is this proved? So forced and unnatural a conſtruction, requires ſome argument to ſupport it.

You ſay, 4. "There is a ſtrong intimation, that they ſhall be graſted in again." No. Not that thoſe Gentiles who *did not continue in his goodneſs*, ſhould be grafted in, after they were once cut off! I cannot find the leaſt intimation of this. "But *all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved*." I believe they will! but this does not imply the reingrafting of theſe Gentiles.

It remains then, that thoſe who are grafted into

into the ſpiritual, inviſible church, may nevertheleſs finally fall.

LXXI. Fourthly, thoſe who are branches of Chriſt the true vine, may yet finally fall from grace.

For thus ſaith our bleſſed Lord himſelf, *I am the true vine, and my Father is the huſbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. I am the vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is caſt forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and caſt them into the fire, and they are burned. John* xv. 1, &c.

Here we may obſerve, 1. The perſons ſpoken of were *in Chriſt branches of the true vine*:

2. Some of theſe *branches abide not* in Chriſt, but *the father taketh them away*:

3. The branches which *abide not*, are *caſt forth*, caſt out from Chriſt and his church.

4. They are not only *caſt forth* but *withered*, conſequently, never grafted in again.

5. They are not only *caſt forth* and *withered* but alſo *caſt into the fire*: And

6. *They are burned.* It is not poſſible for words more ſtrongly to declare, that thoſe who are branches of the true vine may finally fall.

"But this, you ſay, furniſhes an argument for, not againſt, the perſevering of the ſaints."

Yes, juſt ſuch an argument for final perſeve-

rance, as the above cited words of St. Paul to Timothy.

But how do you make it out? Why thus. "There are two sorts of branches in Christ the vine: the one fruitful, the other unfruitful. The one are eternally chosen, and these abide in him, and can never withdraw away." Nay, this is the very point to be proved. So that you now, immediately and directly beg the question.

"The other sort of branches are such as are in Christ only by profession: who get into churches, and so are reckoned in Christ, and these in time wither away. These never had any life, grace or fruitfulness from him."

Surely you do not offer this by way of argument! You are again taking for granted the very point to be proved.

But you will prove that "those are *branches in* Christ, who *never had any life or grace from him*, because the churches of Judea and Thessalonica are said to be in Christ, tho' every individual member was not savingly in him." I deny the consequence, which can never be made good, unless you can prove, that those very Jews or Thessalonians who never had any life or grace from him, are nevertheless said by our Lord to be *branches in him*.

It remains, that true believers, who are branches of the true vine, may nevertheless finally fall.

LXXII. Fifthly, Those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the

the pollutions of the world may, yet fall back into thoſe pollutions and periſh everlaſtingly.

For thus ſaith the apoſtle *Peter*, *If after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, thro' the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour* Jeſus Chriſt, (the only poſſible way of eſcaping them) *they are intangled again therein and overcome, the latter end, is worſe with them than the beginning*, 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.

But you ſay 1. " Their knowledge was not " an experimental knowledge." And how do you prove this? " Becauſe had it been ſuch, they could not have loſt it." You are begging the queſtion again.

You ſay, 2. " *Eſcaping the pollutions of the world*, " ſignifies no more than an outward reformation." How prove you that? You aim at no proof at all. But he that will grant it, may.

You ſay, 3. " Theſe perſons never had any change wrought upon them. They were no other than dogs and ſwine, not only before and after, but even while they outwardly abſtained from groſs enormities."

I grant, that before and after that time, during which they *eſcaped the pollutions of the world*, (or as St. Peter words it in his former epiſtle, *the corruption that is in the world*) they might well be termed either *dogs or ſwine*, for their groſs enormities. But that they deſerved ſuch an appellation during that time, I cannot grant without ſome proof.

It remains, that thoſe who by the inward knowledge of Chriſt, have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, may yet fall back into thoſe pollutions and periſh everlaſtingly.

LXXIII. Sixthly, Thoſe who ſee the light of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, of the witneſs and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God, as to periſh everlaſtingly.

For thus ſaith the writer to the Hebrews, *It is impoſſible for thoſe who were once inlightened, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt—If they fall away, to renew them again to repentance; ſeeing they crucify to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open ſhame.*

Muſt not every unprejudiced perſon ſee, the expreſſions here uſed are ſo ſtrong and clear, that they cannot without groſs and palpable wreſting, be underſtood of any but true believers?

"But the apoſtle makes only a ſuppoſition, "*If they ſhall fall away.*"

The apoſtle makes no ſuppoſition at all. There is no *if* in the original. The words are Αδυνατον τους απαξ φωτισθεντας---και παραπεσοντας· That is, in plain Engliſh, *It is impoſſible to renew again unto repentance*

repentance, thoſe who were once inlightened, and have fallen *away.*"

" No. The words in the original lie literally thus. *It is impoſſible for thoſe who were once inlightened*—and they falling away, *to renew them again unto repentance:* that is, ſhould they fall away, which is in plain Engliſh, if they fall away."

Excuſe me for ſpeaking plain Engliſh here. *Shall a man lie for God?* Either you or I do; for I flatly aver (and let all that underſtand Greek judge between us) that the words in the original do not lie literally thus, *And they falling away,* (if ſo, they muſt be και παραπιπτοντας, in the *preſent* tenſe; not και παραπεσοντας, in the *indefinite*) but that they are tranſlated, *And have fallen away*; as literally as the Engliſh tongue will bear.

Therefore here is no *if* in the caſe, no ſuppoſition at all, but a plain declaration of matter of fact.

LXXIV. " But why do you imagine theſe perſons were true believers?" Becauſe all the expreſſions in their eaſy, natural ſenſe, imply it.

They *were once inlightened*; an expreſſion familar with the apoſtle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So *the God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, give unto you the ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation—The eyes of your underſtanding being* inlightened, *that ye may know what is the hope of his calling—And what is the exceeding greatneſs*

greatneſs of his glory, to us-ward that believe, Eph. i. 17, &c. So again, God, *who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath* ſhined *in our hearts, to give* the light *of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt,* 2 *Cor.* iv. 6.

" Nay, *they were inlightened* means only, they were *baptized* ; or *knew* the doctrines of the goſpel."

I cannot believe this, till you bring me a few paſſages from St. Paul's writings, wherein that expreſſion is evidently taken in either of theſe ſenſes.

Again. They *had taſted of the heavenly gift* (emphatically ſo called) *and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt.* So St. Peter likewiſe couples them together, *(Acts* ii. 38,) *Be baptized for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.* Whereby the love of God was ſhed abroad in their hearts with all the other fruits of the ſpirit.

The expreſſion they had taſted *of the heavenly gift,* is taken from the pſalmiſt, *Taſte and ſee that the Lord is good.* As if he had ſaid, Be ye as aſſured of his love, as of any thing you ſee with your eyes. And let the aſſurance thereof be ſweet to your ſoul, as honey is to your tongue.

" But this means only, they had ſome notions of remiſſion of ſins and heaven, and ſome deſires after them. And they had received the extraordinary

traordinary gifts of the Holy Ghoſt." This you *affirmed*; but without any colour of proof.

It remains, that thoſe who ſee the light of the glory of God, in the faith of Jeſus Chriſt, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, of the witneſs and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheleſs ſo fall from God, as to periſh everlaſtingly.

LXXV. Seventhly, Thoſe who live by faith, may yet fall from God and periſh everlaſtingly.

For thus ſaith the apoſtle. *The juſt ſhall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, Heb. x. 38. *The juſt*, (the juſtified perſon, of whom only this can be ſaid) *ſhall live by faith*, even now ſhall live the life which is hid with Chriſt in God; and if he endure unto the end, ſhall live with God for ever. *But if any man draw back*, ſaith the Lord, *my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him:* that is, I will utterly caſt him off, and accordingly the drawing back here ſpoken of, is termed in the verſe immediately following, *drawing back to perdition.*

"But the perſon ſuppoſed to draw back, is not the ſame with him that is ſaid to live by faith."

I anſwer, 1. Who is it then? Can any man draw back from faith who never came to it? But

2. Had

2. Had the text been fairly tranſlated, there had been no pretence for this objection. For the original runs thus: ὁ δικαιος εκ πιστεως ζησεται· και εαν υποστειληται—If ὁ δικαιος, *the juſt man that lives by faith* (ſo the expreſſion neceſſarily implies, there being no other *nominative* to the *verb*) *draws back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.*

" But your tranſlation is too inaccurate." Be pleaſed to ſhew me wherein?

" I grant he may draw back: and yet not draw back to perdition." But then it is not the drawing back which is here ſpoken of.

" However here is only a ſuppoſition, which proves no fact." I obſerve you take that as a general rule, ſuppoſitions prove no facts. But this is not true. They do not always: but many times they do. And whether they do or no in a particular text, muſt be judged from the nature of the ſuppoſition, and from the preceding and following words.

" But the inſerting *any man* into the text, is agreeable to the grammatical conſtruction of the words." This I totally deny. There is no need of any ſuch inſertion. The preceding *nominative* ſuffices.

" But one that lives by faith, cannot draw back. For *whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.*"

This proves no more, than that all who are glorified, are pardoned and ſanctified firſt.

" Nay,

" Nay, but St. Paul ſays, *ye are dead; and your life is hid with Chriſt in God. When Chriſt who is our life, ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in glory.*"

Moſt ſure, if you endure to the end. *Whoſoever believeth in him* to the end *ſhall never die.*

LXXVI. " But, to come more home to the point. I ſay, this text is ſo far from militating againſt perſeverance, that it greatly eſtabliſhes it."

You are very unhappy in your choice of texts to eſtabliſh this doctrine. Two of theſe eſtabliſh it, juſt as this does, as we have ſeen already. Now pray let us hear, how you prove perſeverance from this text.

" Very eaſily. Here are two ſorts of perſons mentioned; he that lives by faith, and he that draws back to perdition."

Nay, this is the very queſtion. I do not allow that two perſons are mentioned in the text. I have ſhewn, it is one and the ſame perſon, who once lived by faith, and afterwards draws back.

Yet thus much I allow; two ſorts of believers are in the next verſe mentioned; ſome that draw back, and ſome that perſevere. And I allow, the apoſtle adds, *We are not of them who draw back unto perdition.* But what will you infer from thence? This is ſo far from contradicting what has been obſerved before, that it manifeſtly confirms it. It is a farther proof, that there

there are thoſe who draw back unto perdition, although theſe were not of that number.

" I muſt ſtill aver, that the text is rightly tranſlated: which I prove thus:

" The original text (Hab. ii. 4.) runs thus: *Behold his ſoul who is lifted up, is not upright in him; but the juſt ſhall live by faith.*

" This the Seventy render Εαν υποστειληται, ουκ ευδοκει η ψυχη μου εν αυτῳ· ο δε δικαιος εκ πιστεως μου ζησεται. *If a man draw back, my ſoul hath no pleaſure in him. But the juſt ſhall live by faith,* (i. e. faith in me.)

" Now here the man in the former clauſe who *draws back*, is diſtinguiſhed from him in the following clauſe, who *lives by faith.*

" But the apoſtle quotes the text from this tranſlation."

True; but he does not " diſtinguiſh the man in the former clauſe who *draws back*, from him in the latter who *lives by faith.*" So far from it, that he quite inverts the order of the ſentence, placing the latter clauſe of it firſt. And by this means it comes to paſs, that although in tranſlating this text from the Septuagint, we muſt inſert *a man*, (becauſe there is no *nominative* preceding) yet in tranſlating it from the apoſtle, there is no need or pretence for inſerting it, ſeeing ο δικαιος ſtands juſt before.

Therefore ſuch an inſertion is a palpable violence to the text, which conſequently is not rightly tranſlated.

It remains, that thoſe who live by faith, may yet fall from God, and periſh everlaſtingly.

LXXVII. Eighthly, Thoſe who are ſanctified by the blood of the covenant, may ſo fall as to periſh everlaſtingly.

For thus again ſaith the apoſtle: *If we ſin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin; but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which ſhall devour the adverſaries. He that deſpiſed Moſes' law died without mercy under two or three witneſſes. Of how much ſorer puniſhment ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy thing.*

It is undeniably plain, 1. That the perſon mentioned here was once ſanctified by the blood of the covenant: 2. That he afterward, by known, wilful ſin, trod under foot the Son of God: and 3. That he hereby incurred a ſorer puniſhment than death, namely, death everlaſting.

"Nay, the immediate antecedent to the relative *he*, is the Son of God. Therefore it was he, not the apoſtate, who was ſanctified (ſet apart for his prieſtly office) by the blood of the covenant."

Either you forgot to look at the original, or your memory fails. *The Son* of God is not the immediate

immediate antecedent to the *relative* HE. The words run thus: *Of how much ſorer puniſhment ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God? και το αιμα της διαθηκης κοινον ηγησαμενος, εν ω ηγιασθη.* You ſee ηγησαμενος, not υιος, is the immediate antecedent to the relative *he.* Conſequently it is the apoſtate, not the Son of God, who is here ſaid to be ſanctified.

" If he was ſanctified, yet this cannot be underſtood of inward ſanctification. Therefore it muſt mean, either that he ſaid he was ſanctified, or that he made an outward profeſſion of religion."

Why cannot the word be underſtood in its proper natural ſenſe, of inward ſanctification?

" Becauſe that is by the Spirit of God." From this very conſideration it appears, that this muſt be underſtood of inward ſanctification: for the words immediately following are, *and hath done deſpite to the Spirit of grace,* even that grace whereby *he was* once *ſanctified.*

It remains, that thoſe who are ſanctified by the blood of the covenant, may yet periſh everlaſtingly.

LXXVIII. If you imagine theſe texts are not ſufficient to prove, that a true believer may finally fall, I will offer a few more to your conſideration, which I would beg you to weigh farther at your leiſure.

Matt.

Matt. v. 13. *Ye* (Chriſtians) *are the ſalt of the earth. But if the ſalt have loſt its ſavour, wherewith ſhall it be ſalted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be caſt out, and trodden under foot of men.*

Chap. xii. 45. *When the unclean ſpirit goeth out of a man,* (as he does out of every true believer) *he walketh through dry places, ſeeking reſt, and findeth none. Then he ſaith, I will return—and he taketh with him ſeven other ſpirits—and they enter in, and dwell there. And the laſt ſtate of that man is worſe than the firſt.*

Chap. xxiv. 10, &c. *And then ſhall many be offended—and the love* (toward God and man) *of many ſhall wax cold. But he that ſhall endure to the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved.*

Ver. 45, &c. *Who then is a faithful and wiſe ſervant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his houſhold? — But if that evil ſervant* (wiſe and faithful as he was once) *ſhall begin to ſmite his fellow-ſervants—the Lord ſhall cut him aſunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites,* apoſtates, being no better than they.

Luke xxi. *Take heed to yourſelves* (ye that believe) *leſt at any time your heart be overcharged with the cares of this life, and ſo that day come upon you unawares.* Plainly implying, that otherwiſe they would not be *accounted worthy to ſtand before the Son of man.*

John viii. 31, 32. *If ye continue in my word, then*

then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

1 Cor. ix. 27. *I keep my body under—lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.*

1 Cor. x. 3, &c. *Our fathers did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink (for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.) But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness—Now these things were for our examples—Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

2 Cor. vi. 1. *We therefore, as workers together with him, beseech you, that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.* But this were impossible, if none that ever had it could perish.

Gal. v. 4. *Ye are fallen from grace.*

Chap. vi. 9. *We shall reap, if we faint not.* Therefore we shall not reap, if we do.

Heb. iii. 4. *We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.*

2 Pet. iii. 17. *Beware, lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.*

2 John v. 8. *Look to yourselves, that we lose not the things which we have wrought.*

Rev. iii. 11. *Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.* And to conclude,

So

So likewiſe ſhall my heavenly Father do alſo unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their treſpaſſes, Matt. xviii. 35. *So!* How? He will retract the pardon he had given, and deliver you to the tormentors.

LXXIX. "Why then you make ſalvation conditional." I *make* it neither conditional nor unconditional. But I *declare* juſt what I find in the bible, neither more nor leſs; namely, that it is bought for every child of man, and actually given to every one that believeth. If you call this conditional ſalvation, God *made* it ſo from the beginning of the world: and he hath *declared* it ſo to be, at ſundry times and in divers manners: of old by Moſes and the prophets, and in latter times by Chriſt and his apoſtles.

"Then I never can be ſaved; for I can perform no conditions; for I can do nothing." No, nor I: nor any man under heaven,—without the grace of God. *But I can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening me.* So can you. So can every believer. And he *has* ſtrengthened, and will ſtrengthen you more and more, if you do not wilfully reſiſt, till you quench his Spirit.

LXXX. "Nay, but God muſt work *irreſiſtibly* in me, or I ſhall never be ſaved." Hold! Conſider that word. You are again advancing a doctrine which has not one plain, clear text to ſupport it. I allow, God may poſſibly at *ſome*

times, work irreſiſtibly in *ſome ſouls*. I believe he *does*. But can you infer from hence, that he *always* works thus in all that are ſaved? Alas, my brother, what kind of concluſion is this? And by what ſcripture will you prove it? Where, I pray, is it written, that none are ſaved but by irreſiſtible grace? By almighty grace, I grant; by that power alone, to which all things are poſſible. But ſhew me any one plain ſcripture for this, That "all ſaving grace is irreſiſtible."

LXXXI. But this doctrine is not only unſupported by ſcripture. It is flatly contrary thereto. How will you reconcile it (to inſtance in a very few) with the following texts?

Matt. xxii. 3, &c. *He ſent to call them, and they* would not *come.*

Mark vi. 5. *He* could *do no mighty works there*, becauſe of their unbelief.

Luke v. 17. *There were phariſees, and the power of the Lord was preſent to heal them.* Nevertheleſs they were not healed in fact, as the words immediately following ſhew.

Luke vii. 29. *The phariſees and lawyers made void the counſel of God, againſt themſelves.*

Luke xiii. 34. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how often would I have gathered thy children, and ye would not.*

John vi. 63, &c. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the words that I ſpeak unto you, they are Spirit.*

But

But there are ſome of you that believe not. Therefore that Spirit did not work irreſiſtibly.

Acts vii. 41. *Ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt: as your fathers did, ſo do ye.*

Chap. xiii. 46. *Ye put it from you, and judge yourſelves unworthy of eternal life.*

Heb. iii. 8. *While it is called to-day, harden not your heart.*

Ibid. ver. 12. *Take heed leſt there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God.*

Heb. xii. 25. *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh.*

LXXXII. I do but juſt give you a ſpecimen of the innumerable ſcriptures which might be produced on this head. And why will you adhere to an opinion not only unſupported by, but utterly contrary both to reaſon and ſcripture? Be pleaſed to obſerve here alſo, that you are not to conſider the doctrine of irreſiſtible grace by itſelf, any more than that of unconditional election, or final perſeverance: but as it ſtands in connexion with unconditional reprobation, that millſtone which hangs about the neck of your whole hypotheſis.

Will you ſay, "I adhere to it, becauſe of its uſefulneſs?" Wherein does that uſefulneſs lie? "It exalts God and debaſes man." In what ſenſe does it exalt God? God in himſelf is exalted above all praiſe. Your meaning therefore I ſup-

pose is this: it displays to others how highly he is exalted, in justice, mercy, and truth. But the direct contrary of this has been shewn at large: it has been shewn by various considerations, that God is not exalted, but rather dishonoured, and that in the highest degree, by supposing him to despise the work of his own hands, the far greater part of the souls which he hath made. And as to the debasing man; if you mean, "This opinion truly humbles the men that hold it," I fear it does not; I have not perceived (and I have had large occasion to make the trial) that all, or even the generality of them that hold it, are more humble than other men. Neither, I think, will you say, that none are humble, who hold it not: so that it is neither a *necessary*, nor a *certain* means of humility. And if it be so sometimes, this only proves that God can bring good out of evil.

LXXXIII. The truth is, neither this opinion nor that, but the love of God humbles man, and that only. Let but this be shed abroad in his heart, and he abhors himself in dust and ashes. As soon as this enters into his soul, lowly shame covers his face. That thought, what is God? what hath he done for *me?* Is immediately followed by, what am I? And he knoweth not what to do, or where to hide, or how to abase himself enough, before the great God of love, of whom

whom he now knoweth, that as his majefty is, fo is his mercy. Let him who has *felt* this, (whatever be his opinion) fay, whether he could then take glory to himfelf? Whether he could afcribe to himfelf any part of his falvation, or the glory of any good word or thought? Lean then, who will, on that broken reed for humility: but let the love of God humble my foul!

LXXXIV. "Why this is the very thing which recommends it. This doctrine makes men love God." I anfwer as before: accidentally it may; becaufe God can draw good out of evil. But you will not fay all who hold it love God; fo it is no *certain* means to that end. Nor will you fay, that none love him who hold it not. Neither therefore is it a *neceffary* means. But indeed when you talk at all of its "making men love God," you know not what you do. You lead men into more danger than you are aware of. You almoft unavoidably lead them into *refting* on that opinion: you cut them off from a true dependence on the fountain of living waters, and ftrengthen them in hewing to themfelves broken ciftern, which can hold no water.

LXXXV. This is my grand objection to the doctrine of reprobation, or (which is the fame) unconditional election. That it is an error I know; becaufe if this were true, the whole fcripture muft be falfe. But it is not only for this, becaufe

it is an error, that I ſo earneſtly oppoſe it, but becauſe it is an error of ſo pernicious conſequences to the ſouls of men; becauſe it directly and naturally tends to hinder the inward work of God in every ſtage of it.

LXXXVI. For inſtance. Is a man careleſs and unconcerned, utterly dead in treſpaſſes and ſins? Exhort him then (ſuppoſe he is of your own opinion) to take ſome care of his immortal ſoul. "I take care ſays he! What ſignifies *my* care? Why what muſt be, muſt be. If I am elect, I muſt be ſaved: and if I am not, I muſt be damned." And the reaſoning is as juſt and ſtrong, as it is obvious and natural. It avails not to ſay, "men may *abuſe* any doctrine." So they may. But this is not abuſing yours. It is the plain, natural *uſe* of it. The premiſes cannot be denied (on your ſcheme) and the conſequence is equally clear and undeniable. Is he a little ſerious and thoughtful now and then, though generally cold and lukewarm? Preſs him then to ſtir up the gift that is in him, to work out his own ſalvation with fear and trembling. Alas, ſays he, what can I do? You know man can do nothing. If you reply, but you do not deſire ſalvation. You are not willing to be ſaved. It may be ſo, ſays he, but God ſhall make me willing in the day of his power. So waiting for irreſiſtible grace he falls faſter aſleep than ever. See him again, when he thoroughly awakes out of ſleep; when, in ſpite of his

his principles, fearfulneſs and trembling are come upon him, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed him. How then will you comfort one who is well-nigh ſwallowed up of over-much ſorrow? If at all, by applying the promiſes of God. But againſt theſe he is fenced on every ſide. Theſe indeed, ſays he, are great and precious promiſes. But they belong to the elect only. Therefore they are nothing to me. I am not of that number. And I never can be: for his decree is unchangeable. Has he already taſted of the good word, and the powers of the world to come? Being juſtified by faith hath he peace with God? Then ſin hath no dominion over him. But by and by, conſidering he may fall *foully* indeed, but cannot fall *finally*, he is not ſo jealous over himſelf as he was at firſt, he grows a little and a little ſlacker, till e're long he falls again into the ſin, from which he was clean eſcaped. As ſoon as you perceive he is intangled again and overcome, you apply the ſcriptures relating to that ſtate. You conjure him not to harden his heart any more, leſt his laſt ſtate be worſe than the firſt. "How can that be, ſays he, once in grace, always in grace: and I am ſure I was in grace once. You ſhall never tear away my ſhield." So he ſins on, and ſleeps on, till he awakes in hell.

LXXXVII. The obſerving theſe melancholy examples day by day, this dreadful havock

which the devil makes of ſouls, eſpecially of thoſe who had begun to run well, by means of this antiſcriptural doctrine, conſtrains me to oppoſe it from the ſame principle whereon I labour to ſave ſouls from deſtruction. Nor is it ſufficient to aſk, are there not alſo many who wreſt the oppoſite doctrine to their own deſtruction? If there are, that is nothing to the point in queſtion: for that is not the caſe here. Here is no wreſting at all: the doctrine of abſolute predeſtination naturally leads to the chambers of death.

Let an inſtance in each kind be propoſed, and the difference is ſo broad, he that runneth may read it. I ſay, "Chriſt died for all. He taſted death for every man, and he willeth all men to be ſaved. O ſays an hearer, then I can be ſaved, *when* I will; ſo I may ſafely ſin a little longer." No, this is no conſequence from what I ſaid: the words are *wreſted* to infer what does not follow. You ſay, "Chriſt died only for the elect: and all theſe muſt and ſhall be ſaved. O, ſays an hearer, then if I am one of the elect, I muſt and ſhall be ſaved. Therefore I may ſafely ſin a little longer; for my ſalvation cannot fail." Now this is a fair conſequence from what you ſaid: the words are not wreſted at all. No more is inferred than what plainly and undeniably follows from the premiſes. And the very ſame obſervation may be made on every article of that doctrine. Every branch of it, as well as this, (however the wiſdom of God may ſometimes draw

good

good out of it) has a natural, genuine tendency, without any wreſting, either to prevent or obſtruct holineſs.

LXXXVIII. Brethren, would ye lie for the cauſe of God? I am perſuaded, ye would not. Think then that as ye are, ſo am I: I ſpeak the truth, before God my judge; not of thoſe who were trained up therein, but of thoſe who were lately brought over to your opinion. Many of theſe have I known, but I have not known one in ten of all that number, in whom it did not ſpeedily work ſome of the above-named effects, according to the ſtate of ſoul they were then in. And one only have I known among them all, after the cloſeſt and moſt impartial obſervation, who did not evidently ſhew, within one year, that his *heart* was changed, not for the better, but for the worſe.

LXXXIX. I know indeed, ye cannot eaſily believe this. But whether ye believe it or no, you believe, as well as I, that without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord. May we not then, at leaſt, join in this, in declaring the nature of inward holineſs, and teſtifying to all the neceſſity of it? May we not all thus far join, in tearing away the broken reeds wherein ſo many reſt, without either inward or outward holineſs, and which they idly truſt will ſupply its place? As far as is poſſible let us join in deſtroying the works

of the devil, and in ſetting up the kingdom of God upon earth, in promoting righteouſneſs, peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt.

Of whatever opinion or denomination we are, we muſt ſerve either God or the devil. If we ſerve God, our agreement is far greater than our difference. Therefore, as far as may be, ſetting aſide that difference, let us unite in deſtroying the works of the devil, in bringing all we can from the power of darkneſs into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And let us aſſiſt each other to value more and more the glorious grace whereby we ſtand, and daily to grow in that grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

THE

THE CONSEQUENCE PROVED.

1. MR. Toplady, a young, bold man, lately publiſhed a pamphlet, an extract from which was ſoon after printed, concluding with theſe words:

"The ſum of all is this; One in twenty (ſuppoſe) of mankind are *elected*; nineteen in twenty are *reprobated*. The *elect* ſhall be ſaved, do what they will: the *reprobate* ſhall be damned, do what they can."

2. A great outcry has been raiſed on that account, as though this was not a fair ſtate of the caſe: and it has been vehemently affirmed, that no ſuch conſequence follows from the doctrine of abſolute predeſtination.

I calmly affirm, It is a fair ſtate of the caſe: this conſequence does naturally and neceſſarily follow from the doctrine of abſolute predeſtination, as here ſtated and defended by bold Mr. Auguſtus Toplady.

Indeed I have not leiſure to conſider the matter at large. I can only make a few ſtrictures, and leave the young man to be farther corrected by (one that is full his match) Mr. Thomas Olivers.

3. " When love is predicated of God, it imples, 1 His everlaſting will, purpoſe, and determination, to ſave his people .†" I appeal to all men, whether it is not a natural conſequence even of this that " all theſe ſhall be ſaved, do what they will."

You may ſay, " O, but they will do only what is good." Be it ſo. Yet the conſequence ſtands.

" *Election* ſignifies, that *ſovereign, unconditional, immutable* act of God whereby he *ſelected* ſome to be eternally ſaved." *Immutable, unconditional!* From hence then it undeniably follows, " Theſe ſhall be ſaved, do what they will."

" Predeſtination, as relating to the elect, is that irreverſible act of the divine will, whereby God determined to deliver *a certain number* of men from hell." *Ergo*, That *certain number* ſhall infallibly be ſaved do what they will. Who can deny the conſequence ?

" Not

† Mr. T.'s tract, chap. 1.

" Not one of the elect can perish, but they must all necessarily be saved.†" Can any assert this, and yet deny that consequence, therefore all the elect shall be saved, do what they will? Unless you would say, it is the proposition itself, rather than a consequence from it.

4. So much for the former part of the question: let us now consider the latter.

" Hatred ascribed to God, implies, a resolution *not* to have mercy on *such and such* men. So Esau *have I hated*; that is, I did from all eternity determine, *not* to have mercy on him.‡" In other words;

I by my dire decree did seal
His fixt, unalterable doom;
Consign'd his unborn soul to hell,
And damn'd him from his mother's womb.

Well then, does it not follow by unavoidable consequence, that *such and such* men, poor, hated Esau in particular, " shall be damned, do what they can?"

" Reprobation denotes God's eternal preterition of some men, and his predestination of them to destruction." And is it possible for them, by any thing they can do, to prevent that destruction? You say, no. It follows, they " shall be damned, do what they can."

" Predestination,

† Chap. 3. ‡ Chap. 1.

" Predeſtination, as it regards the reprobate, is that immutable act of God's will, whereby he hath determined to *leave ſome men* to periſh." And can they avoid it, by any thing they do? You affirm, they cannot. Again therefore it follows, theſe " ſhall be damned, do what they can."

" We aſſert, there is a predeſtination of *particular perſons* to death: which death they ſhall inevitably undergo." That is, " They ſhall be damned, do what they can."

" The *non-elect* were predeſtinated to eternal death.†" *Ergo*, " They ſhall be damned, do what they can."

" The condemnation of the reprobate is neceſſary and inevitable." Surely I need add no more on this head. You ſee, that " the reprobate ſhall be damned, do what they can," is the whole burden of the ſong.

5. Take only two precious ſentences more, which include the whole queſtion.

" We aſſert, that the number of the *elect*,‡ and alſo of the *reprobate*, is ſo *fixt* and *determinate*, that neither can be *augmented* or *diminiſhed*:" and,

" That the decrees of election and reprobation are *immutable* and *irreverſible*."

From each of theſe aſſertions, the whole conſequence follows, clear as the noon-day ſun. Therefore, " The elect ſhall be ſaved, do what they

† Chap. 2. ‡ Chap. 4.

they will: the reprobate ſhall be damned, do what they can."

6. I add a word, with regard to another branch of this kind, charitable doctrine.

Mr. Toplady ſays †, "God has a poſitive will to deſtroy the reprobate for their ſins." *For their ſins!* How can that be? I poſitively aſſert, That (on this ſcheme) they have no ſins at all. They never had: they can have none. For it cannot be a ſin in a ſpark to riſe, or in a ſtone to fall. And the ſpark or the ſtone is not more neceſſarily determined either to riſe or to fall, than the man is to ſin, to commit that rape, or adultery, or murder. For "God did before all time, determine and direct to ſome particular end, every perſon or thing, to which he has given, or is yet to give being." God himſelf did "predeſtinate them to fill up the meaſure of their iniquities:" ſuch was his ſovereign, irreſiſtible decree, before the foundation of the world. *To fill up the meaſure of their iniquities*, that is, to commit every act which they committed. So "God ‡ decreed the Jews to be the crucifiers of Chriſt, and Judas to betray him." Whoſe fault was it then? You plainly ſay, it was not *his* fault, but God's. For what was Judas, or ten thouſand reprobates beſides? Could they reſiſt his decree? No more than they could pull the ſun out of the firmament of heaven. And would God puniſh them with everlaſting deſtruction, for not

† Chap. 1. ‡ Chap. 4.

not pulling the ſun out of the firmament? He might as well do it for this, as for their not doing what (on this ſuppoſition) was equally impoſſible. "But they are puniſhed for their impenitency, ſin, and unbelief." Say unbelief and impenitency; but not ſin. For "God had predeſtinated them to continue in impenitency and unbelief. God had poſitively ordained them to continue in their blindneſs and hardneſs of heart." Therefore their not repenting and believing was no more a ſin, than their not pulling the ſun from heaven.

7. Indeed Mr. T. himſelf owns, "The ſins of the reprobate were not the cauſe of their being *paſt by*; but merely and intirely the ſovereign will and determinating pleaſure of God."

"O, but their ſin was the cauſe of their *damnation*, though not of their *preterition*:" that is, God determined they ſhould live and die in their ſins, that he might afterwards damn them!

*Was ever any thing like this? Yes, I have read ſomething like it. When Tiberius had determined to deſtroy *Sejanus* and all his family, as it was unlawful to put a virgin to death, what could be done with his daughter, a child of nine years old? Why, the hangman was ordered firſt to *deflower*, and then to *ſtrangle* her! Yet even good Tiberius did not order her to be ſtrangled, "*Becauſe* ſhe had been deflowered!" If ſo, it had been a parallel caſe: it had been juſt what is here affirmed of the Moſt High.

8. One

8. One word more. "I will obviate, says Mr. T. a fallacious objection. How is *reprobation* reconcileable with the doctrine of a future judgment? There needs no pains to reconcile these two." No pains! Indeed there does: more pains than all the men upon earth, or all the devils in hell will ever be able to take. But go on. "In the last day, Christ will pass sentence on the non-elect. 1. Not for having done what they could not help, but, 2. For their *wilful ignorance* of divine things, 3. For their *obstinate unbelief*, 4. For their *omissions* of *moral duty*, and, 5. For their *repeated iniquities* and *transgressions*."

* He will condemn them, 1. "Not for having done what they could not help." I say, yes; for having sinned against God to their lives end. But this they could not help. He had himself decreed it. He had determined, they should continue impenitent. 2. "For their *wilful ignorance* of divine things." No. Their ignorance of God, and the things of God, was not wilful, was not originally owing to their own will, but to the sovereign will of God. *His* will, not theirs, was the *primary cause* of their continuing in that ignorance. 3. "For their *obstinate unbelief*." No: how can it be termed obstinate, when they never had a possibility of removing it? When God had absolutely decreed, before they were born, that they should live and die therein? 4. "For their *omissions of moral duty*:" that is, for not loving God and their neighbour,

neighbour, which is the ſum of the moral law. Was it then ever in their power to love God and their neighbour? No; no more than to touch heaven with their hand. Had not God himſelf unalterably decreed, that they ſhould not love either God or man? If therefore they are condemned for this, they are condemned for what they never could help. 5. "For their repeated *iniquities and tranſgreſſions*." And was it ever in their power to help theſe? Were they not predeſtinated thereto before the foundation of the world? How then can the Judge of all the earth conſign them to everlaſting fire, for what was, in effect, his own act and deed?

I apprehend then this is no fallacious objection; but a ſolid and weighty one: and defy any man living, who aſſerts the unconditional decree of reprobation or preterition (juſt the ſame in effect) to reconcile this with the ſcriptural doctrine of a future judgment. I ſay again, I defy any man on earth to ſhew, how, on this ſcheme, God can *judge the world in righteouſneſs*.

THOUGHTS

ON THE

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

OF

CHRIST.

1. A Tract has lately been publiſhed in my name, concerning *the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt.* This calls me to explain myſelf upon that head; which I will do with all the clearneſs I can. But I quarrel with no man for thinking or ſpeaking otherwiſe than I do: I blame none for uſing thoſe expreſſions which he believes to be ſcriptural. If he quarrels with me for not uſing them, at leaſt, not ſo frequently as himſelf,

himſelf, I can only pity him, and wiſh him more of *the mind which was in Chriſt.*

2. *The righteouſneſs of Chriſt* is an expreſſion which I do not find in the bible. *The righteouſneſs of God* is an expreſſion which I do find there. I believe this means, Firſt, The *mercy* of God, as 2 Pet. i. 1. *Them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteouſneſs of God.* How does it appear, that *the righteouſneſs of God* here, means either more or leſs than his *mercy?* Pſalm lxxi. 15, &c. *My mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy righteouſneſs and thy ſalvation:* thy mercy in delivering me. *I will make mention of thy righteouſneſs only. Thy righteoaſneſs, O God, is very high.* Here the *righteouſneſs of God* is expreſly mentioned: but I will not take upon me to ſay, that it means the righteouſneſs or mercy of the Son, any more than of the Holy Ghoſt.

3. I believe this expreſſion means, Secondly, God's method of juſtifying ſinners. So Rom. i. 17. *I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt, for therein is the righteouſneſs of God,* his way of juſtifying ſinners, *revealed.* Chap. iii. 21, &c. *Now the righteouſneſs of God is manifeſted; even the righteouſneſs of God which is by faith;* (unleſs *righteouſneſs* here alſo means *mercy*) *Jeſus Chriſt, whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation thro' faith in his blood: to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of the ſins that are paſt; that he might be juſt, and yet the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus.*

Jeſus. Chap. x. 3. *They being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs*, method of juſtifying ſinners, *and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs*, a method of their own, oppoſite to his, *have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the righteouſneſs of God.*

4. Perhaps it has a peculiar meaning in 2 Cor. v. 21. *He made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God, in* or *through him:* that we might be juſtified and ſanctified, might receive the whole bleſſing of God through him.

5. And is not this the natural meaning of Phil. iii. 8, 9. *That I may win Chriſt, and be found in him*, grafted into the true vine, *not having my own righteouſneſs*, the method of juſtification which I ſo long choſe for myſelf, *which is of the law, but the righteouſneſs which is of God*, the method of juſtification which God hath choſen, *by faith?*

6. "But is not Chriſt termed *our righteouſneſs?*" He is, Jer xxiii. 6. *This is the name whereby he ſhall be called, The Lord our Righteouſneſs.* And is not the plain, indiſputable meaning of this ſcripture, he ſhall *be* what he is *called*, the ſole purchaſer, the ſole meritorious cauſe both of our juſtification and ſanctification?

7. Nearly related to this is the following text, 1 Cor. i. 30. *Jeſus Chriſt is made of God unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.* And what does this prove, but that he is made unto us *righteouſneſs*, or juſtification, juſt as he is *made unto us ſanctification?* In what

ſenſe?

ſenſe? He is the ſole *author* of one, as well as of the other, *the author* of our whole *ſalvation.*

8. There ſeems to be ſomething more implied in Rom. x. 3. Does it not imply thus much? *Chriſt is the end of the law*, not only of the Moſaic diſpenſation, but of the law of works, which was given to Adam in his original perfection, *for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth*; to the end that *every one who believeth* in him, though he have not kept, and cannot keep that law, may be both accounted and made righteous.

9. Accordingly frequent mention is made in ſcripture, of *faith counted for righteouſneſs.* So Gen. xv. 6. *He* (Abraham) *believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteouſneſs:* a text repeated, with but little variation, over and over in the New Teſtament. Rom. iv. 5. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him who juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.* Thus it was that *Noah became heir of the righteouſneſs*, the juſtification *which is by faith*, Heb. xi. 7. Thus alſo *the Gentiles*, when the Jews fell ſhort, *attained to righteouſneſs, even the righteouſneſs which is by faith*, Rom. x. 30. But that expreſſion, *The righteouſneſs of Chriſt*, does not occur in any of theſe texts.

10. It ſeems *righteouſneſs* in the following texts means neither more nor leſs than *juſtification.* Gal. ii. 21. *If righteouſneſs come by the law, then Chriſt is dead in vain.* Chap. iii. 21. *If there had been a law which could have given life,*

life, (ſpiritual life, or a title to life eternal) *then righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law:* though ſome may think it here includes ſanctification alſo: which it appears to do, Rev. xix. 8. *The fine linen is the righteouſneſs of the ſaints.*

11. But when St. Paul ſays, Rom. v. 18. *By the righteouſneſs of one* (called in the following verſe, *the obedience of one*, even his *obedience unto death*, his dying for us) *the free gift came*, does he not mean the righteouſneſs of Chriſt?" Undoubtedly he does. But this is not the queſtion. We are not enquiring what he *means*, but what he *ſays*. We are all agreed as to the *meaning*, but not as to *the expreſſion*, The *imputing the righteouſneſs of Chriſt*; which I ſtill ſay, I dare not inſiſt upon, neither require any one to uſe, becauſe I cannot find it in the bible. If any one can, he has better eyes than me: and I wiſh he would ſhew me where it is.

12. Now if by *the righteouſneſs of Chriſt* we mean any thing which the ſcripture does not mean, it is certain we put darkneſs for light. If we mean the ſame which the ſcripture means by different expreſſions, why do we prefer this expreſſion to the ſcriptural? Is not this correcting the wiſdom of the Holy Ghoſt, and oppoſing our own to the perfect knowledge of God?

13. I am myſelf the more ſparing in the uſe of it, becauſe it has been ſo frequently and ſo dreadfully abuſed; and becauſe the Antinomians uſe it at this day, to juſtify the groſſeſt abomina-

tions,

tions. And 'tis great pity that thoſe who love, who preach and follow after holineſs, ſhould, under the notion of honouring Chriſt, give any countenance to thoſe who continually make him *the miniſter of ſin*, and ſo build on his righteouſneſs, as to live in ſuch ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs as is ſcarce named even among the Heathens.

* 14. And doth not this way of ſpeaking naturally tend to make Chriſt the miniſter of ſin? For if the very *perſonal* obedience of Chriſt (as thoſe expreſſions directly lead me to think) be mine the moment I believe, can any thing be added thereto? Does *my* obeying God add any value to the perfect obedience of Chriſt? On this ſcheme then, are not the holy and unholy on the very ſame footing?

15. Upon the whole, I cannot expreſs my thoughts better than in the words of that good man Mr. Hervey. "If people may be ſafe, and their inheritance ſecure, without any knowledge of theſe particularities, why ſhould you offer to puzzle their heads with a few unneceſſary terms? —We are not very ſolicitous as to the credit, or the uſe of any particular ſet of *phraſes*. Only let men be humbled, as *repenting criminals*, at the Redeemer's feet: let them rely, as *devoted penſioners*, on his precious merits: and they are undoubtedly in the way to a bliſsful immortality." *Dialogues*, vol. I. p. 43. *Dublin edition.*

DUBLIN, April 5, 1762.

A BLOW

A

BLOW at the ROOT:

OR,

Chriſt ſtabbed in the Houſe of his Friends.

Judas, *betrayeſt thou the ſon of man with a kiſs?*
Luke xxii. 46.

1. *WITHOUT holineſs no man ſhall ſee the* Lord, ſhall ſee the face of God in glory. Nothing under heaven can be more ſure than this: *for the mouth of the* Lord *hath ſpoken it.* And tho' heaven and earth paſs away, yet his *word ſhall not paſs away.* As well therefore

might God fall from heaven, as this word fall to the ground. No, it cannot be: none ſhall live with God, but he that now lives to God. None ſhall enjoy the glory of God in heaven, but he that bears the image of God on earth. None that is not ſaved from ſin here, can be ſaved from hell hereafter. None can ſee the kingdom of God above, unleſs the kingdom of God be in him below. Whoſoever will reign with Chriſt in heaven, muſt have Chriſt reigning in him on earth. He muſt have *that mind in him which was in* Chriſt, enabling him to walk as Chriſt *alſo walked.*

2. And yet as ſure as this is, and as clearly as it is taught in every part of the holy ſcripture, there is ſcarce one among all the truths of God, which is leſs received by men. It was indeed acknowledged in ſome degree, even among the wiſer Heathens. Some among them allowed, that nothing would pleaſe God but the *ſancti receſſus Mentis, & incoctum generoſo pectus honeſto*; A virtuous, holy mind, and an heart deep dyed with generous honeſty. But though they could not deny, yet how eaſily and effectually did they evade this? They fancied ſomething elſe would do as well: that ſome rites or ceremonies, ſome external forms, or glorious actions, would ſupply the place of inward holineſs. So the famous *Roman* entitles to future happineſs, not only the good and virtuous, but all

Ob

Ob patriam pugnando vulnera paſſos,
Quique pie Vates, & Phœbo digna locuti;
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes.

So to fight for their country, to write good verſes, or to invent uſeful arts, was abundantly ſufficient, in the judgment of the wiſeſt Heathens, to give men a place in heaven!

3. But this would not paſs with modern Romans. They deſpiſed ſuch groſs imaginations. But though they did not allow theſe, they found out another way to get to heaven without holineſs. In the room of them they ſubſtituted penances, pilgrimages, praying to ſaints and angels: and, above all theſe, maſſes for the dead, abſolution by a prieſt, and extreme unction. And theſe ſatisfy the Romaniſts full as well, as luſtrations did the Heathens. Thouſands of them make no manner of doubt, but, by a diligent uſe of theſe without any holineſs at all, they ſhall *ſee the Lord* in glory.

4. However Proteſtants will not be ſatisfied thus: they know this hope is no better than a ſpider's web. They are convinced, that whoever leans on this, leans on the ſtaff of a broken reed. What then can they do? How ſhall they hope to ſee God without holineſs? Why, by doing no harm, doing good, going to the church and ſacrament. And many thouſands ſit down content with this, believing they are in the high road to heaven.

5. Yet many cannot reſt here. They look upon this as the very *popery of proteſtantiſm.* They well know, that although none can be a real Chriſtian, without carefully abſtaining from all evil, uſing every means of grace at every opportunity, and doing all poſſibly good to all men: yet a man may go thus far, may do all this, and be but an Heathen ſtill. They know this religion is too ſuperficial: it is but as it were ſkin-deep. Therefore it is not Chriſtianity; for that lies in the heart: it is, worſhipping God in Spirit and in truth. It is no other than *the kingdom of God within us:* it is *the life of God* in the ſoul of man. It is the mind which was in Chriſt Jeſus: it is *righteouſneſs and peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt.*

6. Beſides, they ſee that, be this religion ſhallower or deeper, it does not ſtand on the right foundation: ſince *other foundation* for true religion *can no man lay, than that which is laid, even Chriſt Jeſus:* ſince no one can have the mind which was in Chriſt, till he is juſtified by his blood; till he is forgiven and reconciled to God through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt. And none can be juſtified, they are well aſſured, but by faith, even faith alone: ſeeing *to him* only *that believeth on God who juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteouſneſs.*

7. What evaſion now? What way could *Satan* take to make all this light of none effect? What could be done when that grand truth, By

grace

grace ye are saved through faith, was more and more generally received? What indeed but to perſuade the very men who had received it, to *turn the grace of God into laſciviouſneſs?* To this end *Simon Magus appeared again, and taught* "That Chriſt had *done*, as well as ſuffered, *all*: that *his righteouſneſs* being imputed to *us*, we need none of *our own*: that ſeeing there was ſo much righteouſneſs and holineſs *in him*, there needs no more *in us*: that to think we have any, or to deſire or ſeek any, is to renounce Chriſt: that from the beginning to the end of ſalvation, all is *in Chriſt*, nothing *in man*; and that thoſe who teach otherwiſe are *legal* preachers, and know nothing of the *goſpel*."

* 8. This is indeed *a blow at the root*, the root of all holineſs, all true religion. Hereby Chriſt is *ſtabbed in the houſe of his friends*, of thoſe who make the largeſt profeſſions of loving and honouring him: the whole deſign of his death, namely, *to deſtroy the works of the devil*, being overthrown at a ſtroke. For wherever this doctrine is cordially received, it leaves no place for holineſs. It demoliſhes it from top to bottom; it deſtroys both root and branch. It effectually tears up all deſire of it, all endeavour after it. It forbids all ſuch exhortations as might excite thoſe deſires, or awaken thoſe endeavours. Nay it makes men afraid of perſonal holineſs, afraid of cheriſhing any thought of it, or motion toward it leſt they ſhould deny the faith, and reject Chriſt

and his righteouſneſs. So that inſtead of being *zealous of good works*, they are a ſtink in their noſtrils. And they are infinitely more afraid of *the works of God*, than of *the works of the devil.*

* 9. Here is wiſdom! Though not the wiſdom of the ſaints, but wiſdom from beneath. Here is the maſter-piece of Satan: farther than this he cannot go. Men are holy, without a grain of holineſs in them! Holy in Chriſt, however unholy in themſelves: they are *in Chriſt*, without one jot of the mind that was in Chriſt. In Chriſt, though their nature is whole in them. They are *compleat in him*, though they are *in themſelves* as proud, as vain, as covetous, as paſſionate as ever. It is enough: they may be unrighteous ſtill, ſeeing Chriſt has *fulfilled all righteouſneſs!*

10. O ye ſimple ones, *how long will ye love ſimplicity?* How long will ye *ſeek death in the error of your life? Know ye not*, whoever teacheth you otherwiſe, *that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived:* although there are many lie in wait to deceive, and that under the fair pretence of *exalting Chriſt:* a pretence which the more eaſily ſteals upon *you*, becauſe *to you he is precious.* But as the Lord liveth, *Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor ſodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, ſhall inherit the kingdom of God. Such* indeed *were ſome of you. But ye are waſhed, but*

but ye are sanctified, as well as *justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* You are really changed: you are not only *accounted* but actually *made righteous. The law*, the inward power, *of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made* you *free*, really, actually free, *from the law or power of sin and death.* * This is liberty, true gospel liberty, experienced by every believer: not freedom from the law of God, or the works of God, but from the law of sin, and the works of the devil. See that ye *stand fast in* this real, not imaginary *liberty, wherewith Christ hath made you free.* And take heed ye *be not intangled again*, by means of these vain boasters, *in the yoke of* that vile *bondage to sin*, from which ye are now clean escaped. I testify unto you, that if you still continue in sin, Christ shall profit you nothing: that Christ is no Saviour to *you*, unless he saves you *from your sins*; and that unless it purify your heart, faith shall profit you nothing. O when will ye understand, that to oppose either inward or outward holiness, under colour of exalting Christ, is directly to act the part of *Judas*, to *betray the son of man with a kiss?* Repent, repent! Lest he cut you in sunder with the two-edged sword that cometh out of his mouth! It is *you yourselves* that, by opposing the very end of his coming into the world, are crucifying the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame. It is *you* that, by expecting to *see the Lord without holiness*, through

the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, *make the blood of the covenant an unholy thing*, keeping thoſe unholy that ſo truſt in it. O beware! For evil is before you! If thoſe who name not the name of Chriſt, and die in their ſins, ſhall be puniſhed ſeven-fold, ſurely you who thus make Chriſt *a miniſter of ſin*, ſhall he puniſhed ſeventy and ſeven-fold. What! Make Chriſt deſtroy his own kingdom! Make Chriſt a factor for Satan! Set Chriſt againſt holineſs! Talk of Chriſt as *ſaving his people* in *their ſins!* It is no better to ſay, he ſaves them from the guilt, and not from the power of ſin. Will you make the righteouſneſs of Chriſt *ſuch* a cover for the unrighteouſneſs of man? So that by this means, *the unrighteous* of every kind *ſhall inherit the kingdom of God!* Stop! Conſider! What are you doing? You did run well: who hath bewitched you? Who hath corrupted you from the ſimplicity of Chriſt, from the purity of the goſpel? You *did* know, *He that believeth is born of God:* and *whoſoever is born of God ſinneth not*; but while *he keepeth himſelf, that wicked one toucheth him not.* O come back to the true, the pure, the old goſpel! That which ye received in the beginning. Come back to Chriſt, who died to make you an holy people, *zealous of good works. Remember from whence you are fallen, and repent, and do the firſt works.* Your *father worketh hitherto:* do ye work: elſe your faith is vain. For *wilt thou know, O vain,* O empty man, that *faith without works is dead?*

Wilt

Wilt thou know that *though I have all faith, ſo as to remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing?* Wilt thou know, that all the blood and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, unleſs that *mind be in thee which was in* him, and thou likewiſe *walk as Chriſt walked*, will only increaſe thy damnation? *If any man teach otherwiſe, and conſent not to wholeſome words, and to the doctrine which is according to godlineſs, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about ſtrife of words, whereof* come railings, evil ſurmiſings; perverſe diſputings of men of corrupt minds, and deſtitute of the truth. Be no longer afraid of the ſtrongeſt exhortations either to inward or outward holineſs. Hereby God the Father is glorified, and God the Son truly exalted. Do not ſtupidly and ſenſeleſly call this *legal*, a ſilly, unmeaning word. Be not afraid of being *under the law of God*, but of being *under the law of ſin*. Love the ſtricteſt preaching beſt, that which moſt ſearches the heart, and ſhews you wherein you are unlike Chriſt: and that which preſſes you moſt to love him with all your heart, and ſerve him with all your ſtrength.

11. Suffer me to warn you of another ſilly unmeaning word: do not ſay, "I *can do nothing*." If ſo, then you know nothing of Chriſt: then you have no faith. For if you have, if you believe, then you *can do all things thro'* Chriſt who ſtreng-

theneth you. You can love him and keep his commandments: and to you his *commandments are not grievous.* Grievous to them that believe! Far from it. They are the joy of your heart. Shew then your love to Chriſt by keeping his commandments, by walking in all his ordinances blameleſs. Honour Chriſt by obeying him with all your might, by ſerving him with all your ſtrength. Glorify Chriſt by imitating Chriſt in all things, by walking as he walked. Keep to Chriſt by keeping in all his ways. Truſt in Chriſt, to live and reign in your heart. Have confidence in Chriſt that he will fulfil in you all his great and precious promiſes, that he will work in you all the good pleaſure of his goodneſs, and all the work of faith with power. Cleave to Chriſt, 'till his blood have cleanſed you from all pride, all anger, all evil deſire. Let Chriſt do all! Let him that has done all for you, do all in you. Exalt Chriſt as a prince to give repentance: a Saviour both to give remiſſion of ſins, and to create in you a new heart, to renew a right ſpirit within you. This is the goſgel, the pure, genuine goſpel; glad tidings of great ſalvation. Not the new, but the old, the everlaſting goſpel, the goſpel not of Simon Magus, but of Jeſus Chriſt. The God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt give you *according to the riches of his glory, to be ſtrengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Chriſt may*

may dwell in your hearts by faith: that, being rooted and grounded in love, ye may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height: and to know that love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God!

A SUFFICIENT

ANSWER

TO

LETTERS TO THE AUTHOR

OF

THERON AND *ASPASIO*.

In a LETTER to the AUTHOR.

BRISTOL, *November* 1, 1757.

SIR,

IT is not very material who you are. If Mr. Glass is still alive, I suppose you are he. If not, you are at least one of his humble admirers, and probably not very old: So your youth may in some measure plead your excuse, for such a peculiar

peculiar pertneſs, inſolence, and ſelf-ſufficiency, with ſuch an utter contempt of all mankind, as no other writer of the preſent age has ſhewn.

As you uſe no ceremony toward any man, ſo neither ſhall I uſe any toward you, but bluntly propoſe a few objections, to your late performance, which ſtare a man in the face as ſoon as he looks in it.

I object, Firſt, That you are a groſs, wilful ſlanderer. For, 1. You ſay of Mr. Hervey, "He ſhuts up our acceſs to the divine righteouſneſs, by holding forth a preliminary human one as neceſſary to our enjoying the benefit of it."—p. 4.

Again. "You ſet men to work to do ſomething, in order to make their peace with God."—p. 9. This is an abſolute ſlander, founded on that poor pretence, that he ſuppoſes thoſe who repent and believe, and none but thoſe, to "enjoy the benefit of Chriſt's righteouſneſs." And has he not the warrant of Chriſt himſelf for ſo doing? *Repent ye, and believe the goſpel?* If this is "teaching man to acquire a righteouſneſs of his own," the charge falls on our Lord himſelf.

You ſay, 2. "As to that ſtrange ſomething which you call faith, after all you have told us about it, we are at as great a loſs to tell diſtinctly what it is, as when you began."—p. 9.

This is another ſlander. You are at no loſs (as will preſently appear) to tell what Mr. Hervey

means

means by faith. Whether it be right or wrong, his account of it is as clear and distinct as any that ever was given.

You say, 3. "The popular preachers, (so you term Archbishop Tillotson, Dr. Lucas, Crisp, Doddrige, Watts, Gill; Mr. Guthrie, Boston, Erskine, Willison; Mr. Flavel, Marshal; Mr. Griffith Jones, Hervey, Romaine, Whitefield, Wesley) never tell us what they mean by faith, but by some laboured circumlocutions."—p. 282.

This is a third palpable slander, as your own words prove, "They say, faith is a real persuasion that Christ hath died for me."—p. 5. Are you not here told, what they mean by faith? And that without any circumlocution at all?

You confute your own slander still farther, by adding three more. 4. "They make a *pious resolve* the ground of our acceptance with God."—p. 360. No, never. Not one of the writers you have named ever did, or does so now. 5. "The faith they talk of, is only a *timid resolve*, joined with a *fond conjecture*. Or, 6. It is a *fond presumptuous wish*, greatly embarrassed with doubts and difficulties."—p. 404.

Slander all over. We make the righteousness and blood of Christ, the only ground of our acceptance with God. And the faith we talk of is neither more nor less than a divine conviction, that Christ loved *me* and gave himself for *me*.

You

You ſay, 7. " All who preach this doctrine are of the world, and ſpeak of the world; therefore the world heareth them.—p. 14. Therefore they will always be attended by the body of the people."—p. 37.

A ſad miſtake this, in point of fact. For whether they are of the world or no, it is certain the world, the generality of men (good or bad) doth not, and never did hear them. At this day thoſe who hear them are an exceeding ſmall number, in compariſon of thoſe who do not. And if *the body of the people* in any place do *attend* ſome of them, how do they attend? Juſt as they would a mad dog: with ſticks and ſtones and whatever comes to hand.

And this you yourſelf account for extremely well. *Sed oportet Palæmonen eſſe memorem.* " What a figure would a ſmall number of miniſters make in the church either of England or Scotland, who ſhould agree to maintain the plain obvious ſenſe of their own public ſtandards of doctrine; and inſiſt upon an adherence to that ſenſe, as a term of holding communion with them in the ſacred inſtitutions? Their ſituation in the national church would be very uncomfortable as well as extremely ridiculous. For many enemies would ſoon be awakened againſt them, to diſtreſs and miſrepreſent them in various reſpects."—p. 465.

Thus much as a ſpecimen of your veracity. I object, Secondly, that you know not what faith is?

is? You talk about it, and about it, and labour and ſweat, and at laſt come to a moſt lame and impotent concluſion.

You ſay, " That Chriſt died for *me* is a point not eaſily ſettled, a point which the ſcripture no where aſcertains:" (The very thought and nearly the words of Cardinal Bellarmine, in his diſpute with our forefathers.) " So far from it, that it affirms the final perdition of many, who have great confidence of their intereſt in Chriſt." (This only proves, that many fancy they have what they have not; which I ſuppoſe nobody will deny.) " Yea, and declares, that *wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction.*" p. 14. It is ſo; but this is nothing to the point, The nature of true faith.

" Nature, theſe men ſay, begins the work:" (I know none of them who ſay ſo) " And then grace helps out the efforts of nature, and perſuades a man, though he be not mentioned in ſcripture, either by name or ſurname, that Chriſt died for him.——p. 33. So the Spirit whiſpers ſomething to the heart of a ſinner, beſide what he publicly ſpeaks in the ſcriptures. But will any lover of the ſcriptures allow the *poſſibility* of this? That the Spirit ſhould *ever* ſpeak a ſyllable to any man, beſide what he publicly ſpeaks there?"—p. 35. You will preſently allow ſomething wonderfully like it. And you ſuppoſe yourſelf to be a lover of the ſcriptures.

" Some

" Some of the martyrs were aſſured of being the friends of Chriſt."—p. 398. How, which way? Neither their name nor their ſurname was mentioned in ſcripture! Why, " the Holy Ghoſt aſſured their hearts and the hearts of the firſt Chriſtians, That their joy was not the joy of the hypocrite, but the beginning of eternal life. Thus their joy was made full and their love perfected by the higheſt enjoyments it was here capable of.—Every believer finds a refreſhment to his mind, far ſuperior to all the comforts of this life. They ſtand in God's preſence and have their joy made full in beholding the light of his countenance."—p. 402.

Allow this and we will never diſpute, Whether the Spirit does or does not " whiſper any thing to their hearts." It is enough, that they have *the Spirit of adoption, crying in their hearts, Abba, Father:* And that this *Spirit witneſſeth with their ſpirits, that they are the children of God.*

" The chief time of this agency of the Spirit is, while the preachers are declaiming. And the people are in continual expectation of the ſeaſon of power in hearing them."—p. 38.

Yea, and reaſon good, if, as you affirm, " Hearing is the *only mean* whereby God gives faith." —p. 391. But we do not affirm ſo much. We only maintain, That *faith* generally *cometh by hearing.*

But you go on. " They who partake of Chriſt's joy, receive the higheſt evidence that he is the Chriſt.

Chriſt. Thus then faith is greatly confirmed by a kind of preſence of its object. Their love is joyfully inflamed, and they obtain the aſſurance of hope, by having in themſelves an experimental foretaſte of their eternal enjoyment."—p. 415.

Why then what are we diſputing about, ſeeing you are now ſo kind as to allow, not only the *poſſibility*, but the *real exiſtence*, of all that we contend for?

" O, but this is not faith. Faith is quite another thing." What it is? Let us hear *your* account of it.

" The eſſence of true faith is the eternal God."—p. 288.

" What is faith? It is the blood of Chriſt."—p. 330.

Stark, ſtaring nonſenſe! Sir, you can talk ſenſe, if you pleaſe. Why ſhould you palm upon your readers ſuch ſtuff as this?

* Very little better than this is your third definition. " The truth which a man believes is his faith."—p. 301. No, it is not: no more than the light which a man ſees is his ſight. You muſt therefore gueſs again. " To believe this fact, Chriſt roſe from the dead, is faith."—p. 169. " Aſk a man, is the goſpel true or not? If he holds it to be true, this is faith."—p. 296. But is this ſaving faith? " Yes. Every one that believes the goſpel hiſtory ſhall be ſaved."—p. 333.

This

* This is flat and plain. And, if it is but true, every devil in hell will be saved. For it is absolutely certain every one of these believes this fact, Christ rose from the dead. It is certain, every one of these believes the gospel history. Therefore this is not saving faith: neither will every one be saved who believes this fact, Christ rose from the dead. It follows, That (whatever others do) you know not what faith is.

I object, Thirdly, 1. That you yourself "shut up our access to the divine righteousness." 2. That you vehemently contradict yourself, and do the very thing which you charge upon others.

1. You yourself shut up our access to the divine righteousness, by destroying that repentance which Christ has made the way to it. "Ask men, you say, have they sinned or not? If they know they have, this is conviction. And this is preparation enough for mercy." Soft casuistry indeed! He that receives this saying, is never likely either to *repent* or *believe the gospel*. And if he do not, he can have no access to the righteousness of Christ.

Yet you strangely affirm, "A careless sinner is in full as hopeful a way as one that is the most deeply convicted."—p. 292. How can this be, if that conviction be from God? Where he has begun the work, will he not finish it? Have we not reason to hope this? But in a careless sinner that work is not begun; perhaps never will be.

Again,

* Again. Whereas our Lord gives a general command, *Seek and ye ſhall find*; you ſay, "Saving faith was never yet *ſought*, or in the remoteſt manner *wiſhed for* by an unbeliever."—p. 372. A propoſition as contrary to the whole tenor of ſcripture, as to the experience of every true believer. Every one who now believes, knows how he *ſought* and *wiſhed for* that faith, before he experienced it. It is not true even with regard to *your* faith, a belief of the bible. For I know Deiſts at this day, who have often *wiſhed* they could believe the bible, and owned "it was happy for them that could."

2. You vehemently contradict yourſelf, and do the very thing which you charge upon others.

"If we imagine we poſſeſs or deſire to attain any requiſite to our acceptance with God, beſide or in connexion with the *bare work of Chriſt*, Chriſt ſhall profit us nothing."—p. 96.

Again. "What is required of us in order to our acceptance with God? Nothing. The leaſt attempt to do any thing is damnably criminal."—

Very good. Now for ſelf-conſiſtency. "What Chriſt has done is that which quiets the conſcience of man as ſoon as *he knows it*. So that he need aſk no more than, "Is it true or not? If he *finds it true*, he is happy. If he does not, he can reap no comfort from it. Our comfort ariſes from *the perſuaſion* of this."—p. 12.

Again, "Men are juſtified by a *knowledge* of

of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt."—p. 406. And yet again,

" The ſole requiſite to acceptance is, divine righteouſneſs *brought to view*."—p. 291.

So you have brought matters to a fine concluſion, confuting an hundred of your own aſſertions, and doing the very thing for which you have been all along ſo unmercifully condemning others. You yourſelf here teach another " requiſite to our acceptance, beſide *the bare work of Chriſt*," viz. the *knowing* that work, the *finding it true*. Therefore by your own word, " Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing." In one page you ſay, " Nothing is required in order to our acceptance with God :" In another, " Divine righteouſneſs *brought to view* is requiſite to our acceptance." *Brought to view!* What ſelf-righteouſneſs is this? Which of the popular preachers could have done worſe? " Men are juſtified by *a knowledge of* the righteouſneſs of Chriſt." Knowledge! What *our own* knowledge! *Knowledge in us!* Why this is the very thing which *we* call faith. So you have fairly given up the whole queſtion, juſtified your opponents, and condemned yourſelf as *damnably criminal!*

I object, Fourthly, That you have no charity, and that you know not what charity is. That you know not what it is, manifeſtly appears from the wonderful definition you give of it. " Charity, you ſay, is fellowſhip with God in his bleſſedneſs."

ſedneſs."—p. 453. Muddy, confuſed, *ut nihil ſupra!* We know, he that loveth hath fellowſhip with God. But yet the ideas of one and of the other are widely different. We know, *God is love: and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* But yet loving him is not the ſame thing with dwelling in him. If it were, the whole ſentence would be flat tautology.

You ſay, 2. Charity is "the love of the truth."—p. 456. Not at all: No more than it is the love of the ſun. It is the love of God, and of man for God's ſake: No more and no leſs.

You ſay, 3. "Chriſt is known to us only by report." (That is not granted.) "And charity is the love of that report."—p. 455. Every intelligent reader will want no further proof, that you know not what charity is.

No wonder then that you have it not: nay, that you are at the utmoſt diſtance, both from the love of God and of your neighbour. You cannot love God, becauſe you do not love your neighbour. For he that loves God, loves his brother alſo. But ſuch hatred, malevolence, rancour, bitterneſs, as you ſhew to all who do not exactly fall in with your opinion, was ſcarce ever ſeen in a Jew, an Heathen, or a Popiſh inquiſitor.

"Nay, but you abhor perſecution. You would perſecute no man." I ſhould be very loath to truſt you. I doubt, were it in your power, you would make more bonfires in Smithfield than Bonner

Bonner and Gardiner put together. But if not, if you would not perſecute with fire and faggot.

———*Mirum!*
Ut neq; calce Lupus quenquam, neq; dente petit bos:

What does this prove? Only that you murder in another way. You ſmite with the tongue: With the poiſon of aſps which is under your lips.

A few ſpecimens follow:

"The popular preachers worſhip another God."—p. 338. "It can never be allowed that Dr. Doddridge worſhipped the ſame God with Paul."—p. 470. "Notice the difference betwixt the God of theſe preachers and the true God; betwixt their Chriſt and the Chriſt preached by the apoſtles: betwixt their ſpirit and the Spirit that influenced the apoſtles."—p. 40.

"I know no ſinners more hardened, none greater deſtroyers of mankind than they."—p. 98. "By no ſmall energy of deceit, they darken the revelation of God, and change the doctrine of the bleſſed God, into a doctrine of ſelf-dependence." Strange! That you yourſelf ſhould do the very ſame thing! Averring, that "Men are juſtified by a *knowledge* of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt," not by *the bare work* which Chriſt has wrought! You put me in mind of an old uſurer, who vehemently thanked a miniſter that had preached a ſevere ſermon againſt uſury. And being

ing aſked, Why do *you* talk thus? Replied, "I wiſh there were no uſurer in London *beſide myſelf!*" Sir, Do not you wiſh there was no miniſter in Great-Britain who taught this doctrine *beſide yourſelf?*

"That any who has learnt his religion from the New Teſtament, ſhould miſtake their doctrine for the Chriſtian, is aſtoniſhing."—p. 40. Theirs, or yours; for it happens to be one and the ſame with regard to the preſent point. "By many deceits they *change the truth of God into a lie.*"—ib. If they do, ſo do you. Indeed you heavily complain of the imputation. You ſay, "It is both aſtoniſhing and provoking, that, after all, men will ſay, there is no difference between *their* ſcheme and *yours.*" And yet, after all, ſo it is: Truth is great, and *will* prevail. In the leading point, that of juſtification, both you and they teach, "Men are juſtified by a knowledge of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt." Only they think, it is a divine, ſupernatural, experimental knowledge, wrought in the inmoſt ſoul: and you think, it is a bare hiſtorical knowledge, of the ſame kind with that which the devils have.

One ſpecimen more of your unparallelled charity, which in any but yourſelf would be aſtoniſhing. "If any one chuſes to go to hell by a devout path, let him ſtudy any one of thoſe four famous treatiſes, Mr. Guthrie's trial of a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt, Mr. Marſhall's goſpel-myſtery of ſanctification, Mr. Boſton's human nature in its four-

four-fold ſtate, and Dr. Doddridge's riſe and progreſs of religion in the ſoul. If any profane perſon who deſires to be converted, enter into the ſpirit of thoſe books, he thereby becomes two-fold more a child of hell than he was before."—p. 436.

Such is the doctrine! Such is the ſpirit of Palæmon! Condemning the whole generation of God's children! Sending all his opponents to hell at once: caſting arrows, firebrands, death on every ſide! But I ſtop. God be merciful to thee a ſinner! And ſhew thee compaſſion, though thou haſt none for thy fellow-ſervants! Otherwiſe it will be more tolerable, I will not ſay for Seneca or Epictetus, but for Nero or Domitian, in the day of judgment than for thee!

AN EXTRACT OF TWO DISCOURSES ON THE Conflagration and Renovation of the WORLD.

Written by JAMES KNIGHT, D. D. late Vicar of *St. Sepulchre*, LONDON.

2 PET. iii. 10, 11.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the earth alſo and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up.

Nevertheleſs we, according to his promiſe, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs.

WAS the faſhion of this world never to paſs away; were our houſes and our lands to continue for ever, and ourſelves in poſſeſſion

ſeſſion of them to all ages; had no changes happened already to induce us to believe, that greater may follow in heaven and earth; the doctrines relating to a judgment to come, the ſuddenneſs of it, and the changes following in heaven and earth, might be treated as the fancies of the fearful and ſuperſtitious, or the artifice of cunning and ambitious men, to awe the ſimple, and ſecure their obedience, by working on their fears. But the life of man being ſhort and uncertain, and the earth having ſuffered already from a flood, and ſcripture aſſuring us (for I ſpeak to thoſe who believe the ſcripture) that a worſe evil will again diſtreſs it, when the world ſhall be burnt and purified by fire; and the ſame ſcripture teaching us farther, that howſoever things may proceed at preſent in their wonted courſe, through the patience of Chriſt, yet the time will come, and that on a ſudden, when the Son ſhall appear in the terrors of juſtice, and the ſweetneſs of mercy, to puniſh the wicked, and reward the righteous, and deliver the creature from the effects of the curſe to which it is ſubjected by the ſin of man; it highly concerns us to conſider the effects of the coming of Chriſt, that being timely prepared, we may eſcape the evils of the terrible burning mentioned in the text, and be heirs of the bleſſings of the world to come.

In treating of the text I ſhall conſider,

I. The extent and cauſe, the end and time of the general burning or diſſolution of all things, which is thus expreſſed in the words of the text, *The heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the earth alſo and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up.*

II. The extent and cauſe, the end and time of the renovation following: *Nevertheleſs we, according to his promiſe, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs.*

I. *Firſt*, I ſhall conſider the extent and cauſe, the end and time of the general burning. The extent of the burning is to heaven and earth; for ſays the apoſtle, *The heavens ſhall paſs away, the elements ſhall melt, and the earth be burnt up.* The *heavens ſhall paſs away*; that is, the firſt ſymptom of nature's expiring in this great fever, is the darkneſs of the heavens: for as the light was the beginning of the creation of the world, being the firſt work of the firſt day; ſo the withdrawing of the light will fore-run its diſſolution, or returning to chaos. For, according to St. John, *The ſun ſhall become black as ſackcloth of hair, and the moon become as blood; and the ſtars of heaven fall unto the earth, even as a fig tree caſteth her untimely figs, when ſhe is ſhaken of a mighty wind.* Which ſcene of horror is thus introduced, *Lo, there was a great earthquake*, or rather, *a great ſhaking*

ſhaking, that is, of heaven and earth. For the lights are *ſet in the firmament of heaven*, and when that ſhall vaniſh, they cannot but ſuffer a notable change. It ſhall *periſh* and be *changed*, ſays the Pſalmiſt: *It ſhall vaniſh like ſmoke* ſays the prophet Iſaiah: *And its power ſhall be ſhaken*, ſays the Son of God. Which St. John repreſents after this manner, *The heaven departed as a ſcrowl, when it is rolled together.*

The curtain of heaven will be firſt drawn back, e're the Son will appear as Judge of the world in power and glory, and the viſible light, which the ſcripture repreſents as the *garment* of God, will firſt be put off, that the *Sun of righteouſneſs* may riſe in *the eaſt, and ſhine unto the weſt.* For *the moon ſhall be confounded* and *the ſun be aſhamed* at the glorious preſence of the Son of God, as the ſtars grow dim at the approaching brightneſs of the riſing ſun. St. Peter tells us, *That the heavens being on fire ſhall be diſſolved.* By which it appears, that the burning of the heavens ſhall accompany or follow the great concuſſion, as ſhakings of the earth are frequently followed with fiery eruptions. An idea of which you may probably form from the frightful † appearance ſome years ago obſerved in the ſky; when ſhoots of light riſing to a point from the ſeveral parts of the viſible *horizon*, preſented the terrify-

† Theſe appearances were about the time of the rebellion in Scotland, in the reign of King George the firſt.

ing figure of an arch of fire compaſſing the earth, and threatening ruin to the inhabitants of it. The apoſtle adds, that *the elements ſhall melt*, that is, as watry vapours falling from above in impetuous ſhowers, met with the water of the *great deep* riſing from beneath, and covered the earth with a ſwelling deluge in the days of Noah; ſo fiery meteors and burning exhalations ſhot and diſcharged from the regions of the air, and ſtrengthened with the influence of the labouring heavens, will deſcend on the earth like the brimſtone and fire from God upon Sodom, and together with the central, or ſubterraneous fires burſting from beneath, will lay waſte its ſurface, and convert the whole into a glowing monument of God's indignation. For *the earth alſo, and all the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up*; that is, the works of the pride and wantonneſs of man, their lofty buildings, curious gardens, and retirements of pleaſure; their populous cities, filled with oppreſſion, riot, and wealth; their caſtles and fortreſſes, the marks of ſervitude, and ſupports of violence; their pompous navies, the ſupply of luxury; with other effects of vanity and power, will all be conſumed and vaniſh into ſmoke in this dreadful burning. *The day of the Lord of hoſts*, ſays Iſaiah, *ſhall be upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ſhips of Tarſhiſh, and upon all pleaſant pictures.*

Secondly,

Secondly, The efficient cauſe of this great diſſolution is the power of God. *I ſaw*, ſays St. John, *a great white throne, and him that ſat on it, from whoſe face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.* But the moral cauſe is the ſin of mankind. If we ſearch the records of holy ſcripture, it will every where appear, that changes in the elements from better to worſe are owing to ſin, as I ſhall endeavour to ſhew from particular inſtances. The earth which abounded with wholeſome herbs and delicious fruits, the ſubſiſtence of man, of beaſts, and of birds, was curſed with barrenneſs for Adam's tranſgreſſion, and ſhews its fertility in bringing forth thorns to increaſe the labour and ſorrow of man. In proceſs of time, when wickedneſs increaſed and ſpread with poſterity, and the meaſure of their ſin was equal to their numbers, the earth was overflown with a deluge of water, to purge it from the filth of a people immerſed in the pleaſures of ſenſe. And in after-ages, droughts, barrenneſs, earthquakes, and devaſtations were alike owing to the wickedneſs of man. *He turneth a fruitful land into barrenneſs*, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *for the wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.* And Iſaiah, *The earth ſhall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and ſhall be removed like a cottage.* And why? *The tranſgreſſion thereof ſhall be heavy upon it; and it ſhall fall, and not riſe again.*

If we pafs to the waters, it will no lefs appear that fprings are dried up, rivers fail, or are turned into blood, and the fea rages, to diftrefs finners, and afflict them in a way that points out their fin. *He turneth the rivers into a wilderneſs*, fays the Pfalmift, *and the water-ſprings into dry ground. Thou art righteous, O Lord*, fays the angel of the waters, *becauſe thou haſt judged thus*, that is, in turning into blood, the ocean, the rivers and fountains of waters, *for they have ſhed the blood of ſaints and prophets; and thou haſt given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.* If we look into the air; thunder, lightning, hailſtones, and rain, in uncommon meafure, form, and degree; noxious qualities, fpreading infection wherefoever they go; and violent tempefts lifting up the fea, and ravaging the earth, are the weapons and inftruments of God's indignation, with which he reftrains and punifhes fin. *Take me up*, fays Jonah, *and caſt me forth into the ſea; ſo ſhall the ſea be calm unto you. For I know that for my ſake this great tempeſt is upon you.* And laftly, if we afcend to the ftars and luminaries of heaven, we find them at variance with the wicked and impenitent, or fuffering changes on account of their fin. *The ſtars in their courſes fought againſt Siſera*, or fhot down baneful and deftructive influences. The *ſun was darkened* in a wonderful manner at the noon day, while the Son of God, the *light of the world*, was dying on the crofs.

And

And its heat will increaſe by the vial of wrath to ſuch an exceſs, as to ſcorch and torment the bodies of men, it was made to cheriſh. And it is not improbable that Job's words, *The heavens are not clean in his ſight*, or *the ſtars are not pure in his ſight*, may be ſpoken of thoſe bodies with relation to the changes, which they ſuffer through ſin; for *ſin* is repreſented as *reaching unto heaven.*

Theſe are the effects which are already wrought in the world through the wickedneſs of man. And if ſin be the occaſion of all the diſorders in heaven or earth, from the beginning of the world to the age we live in, we may well infer, that the greateſt of all, the diſſo ution of the world, will be owing to the ſame evil. For ſays God, *A fire is kindled in my anger, and ſhall burn unto the loweſt hell, and ſhall conſume the earth with her increaſe, and ſet on fire the foundation of the mountains.*

Thirdly. The end of the diſſolution, or general burning, is to aboliſh the memory of paſt ſin, by deſtroying the works and monuments of it. To take away from ſinners the fewel of their luſts, and the means of offending, the goods of this li'e. To change the ſcene of their wicked actions, where they have long gone on in blaſphemy againſt God, and their inſults upon men; and to puniſh the wicked for the ſins they have obſtinately and habitually committed.

Firſt, The end of the diſſolution, is to aboliſh the memory of paſt ſin, by deſtroying the works and monuments of it. The wickedneſs of man frequently diſcovers itſelf in laſting effects; and memorials remain to this very day of the cruelty, pride, and groſs ſuperſtition of former ages, and people renowned for their riches and power. The ſurface of the earth is ſcarred with the effects of military rage. And the nakedneſs of countries, formerly rich in the produce of their ſoil and number of inhabitants, and the ruins of ancient and flouriſhing cities, proclaim the violence and ambition of the powerful. In other places, where plenty and power have for a long time flouriſhed, cities begun in induſtry and juſtice, but increaſed with the gain of avarice and fraud, become the ſeat of luxury, pride, and all ſorts of wickedneſs. Edifices ariſe for effeminate pleaſure, and ſplendid feats to tranſmit to poſterity the names of men, who attribute their greatneſs to their own prudence, courage, and foreſight. Delightful gardens, cool grots, and refreſhing ſtreams, which alike proclaim the labourer's toil, and the artiſt's ſkill, are frequent inſtances of the vanity of the rich, and ſerve for retirements to wantonneſs and ſloth. To which may be added, the diſorders in the elements introduced by the curſe, the puniſhment of ſin. All which being marks and memorials of man's diſobedience, an end will be put to this ruinous ſtate and condition of things by the juſtice of God, when the time of his patience and

and forbearance is fulfilled, and the righteouſneſs of the ſaints and their number is compleated.

Secondly, The end of the diſſolution is to take away from ſinners, the fewel of their luſt, and the means of offending, the goods of this life. Experience teaches us that the unjuſt will oppreſs ſo long as they have power: That the drunkards will revel, while the vineyards are fruitful; and that the riches of the earth, the waters, and the air, will ever be the ſpoil of the glutton and ſenſualiſt. If ſome are reclaimed by the word of God, the reproofs of conſcience, and the counſel of a friend, by loſſes in fortune, bodily ſickneſs, or other methods of divine goodneſs, yet others go on ſo long as they have power and opportunity to ſin. If ſome are cut off, and removed from the comforts of this preſent life, which they conſtantly abuſe to their own ſhame, and the diſhonour of God; yet others ariſe and come in their ſtead, but in the pleaſures which corrupted their anceſtors, and promiſe a ſucceſſion of like ſinners in the next age from the bad example left to poſterity. When vice is propagated after this manner, and revives in the youth who riſe in the place of their fading anceſtors, when no calls nor forbearance of God can recover them from ſin, no promiſes of greater happineſs divert their purſuit after ſenſual entertainments, the objects they are fond of, and will not depart from, God will remove them by his juſt judgments, and leave them naked and deſtitute of good. If

will return, says God, *and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness,—and none shall deliver her out of my hand.*

Thirdly. The end of the dissolution is to change the scene of the wickedness of men, where they have long gone on in their blasphemies against God, and their insults upon their neighbour. The mystery of iniquity, which began in this world, will here be compleated, and the actors of it receive their reward. For we learn from the methods of divine justice, that places suffer for the wickedness of the inhabitants. Thus populous cities, the scenes of avarice, fraud, and uncleanness, have been turned into ruins by the rage of man, or immediate vengeance of Almighty God, as Sodom and Gomorrah, Adma and Zeboim, whose plains are witnesses to this very day of the fire of his wrath, which burnt up a people already inflamed with unnatural lust. And the sad fate which has happened successively to the parts of the earth, like a deadly disease which cannot be cured, will at last prevail and ruin the whole. There will no dens be left for the robbers to lurk in, no secret chambers for the adulterers and unclean, nor any repositories for the fruits of unrighteousness, and the instruments of sin. The seat of the scorner and the throne of violence will be over turned, and nothing remain but a place of torment, where he who flies

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from the preſent diſtreſs can have no relief, but that which ariſes from the ſad experience of variety of evil. As it was written, *He who fleeth from the noiſe of the fear, ſhall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midſt of the pit, ſhall be taken in the ſnare: For the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do ſhake.*

Laſtly. The end of the diſſolution is to puniſh the wicked for their paſt ſins. *The heavens and the earth which are now,* ſays St. Peter, *by the ſame word are kept in ſtore, reſerved unto fire againſt the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.* It has pleaſed God in diſpenſing puniſhments to correct ſinners ſometimes in the place where the ſin was committed. *Thus ſaith the Lord,* ſays Elijah to Ahab, *in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, ſhall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.* And in the prophet Jeremiah, *Becauſe they have forſaken me,* ſaith the Lord, *and have eſtranged this place,* (that is, Tophet) *and have burnt incenſe in it unto other Gods,——And have filled this place with the blood of innocents;—Therefore behold the day is come, ſaith the Lord, that—I will make void the counſel of Judah and Jeruſalem in this place, and I will cauſe them to fall by the ſword before their enemies.* And in like manner, ſinners ſhall be puniſhed in the earth they have corrupted. The judge of the world ſhall raiſe them from the duſt, to be witneſſes of the iſſue and concluſion of ſin; to experience

rience ſorrows greater than thoſe they have created others; to feel the want of the corn, and the wine, and the bleſſings of nature they have groſly abuſed; and fully to learn, that the world is the workmanſhip of Almighty God, ſubject to his power, and changed at his will for a curſe to the wicked, and a bleſſing to the juſt; and not of neceſſity, as they fooliſhly imagined, or by blind chance. The wicked prince may perhaps be tormented in the very territory where he has exerciſed cruelty, and oppreſſed the people committed to his care. And the voluptuary puniſhed in his garden of delight, to the end that the memory of paſt joys may add to the weight of his preſent afflictions, and accumulated evils may be felt there, where pleaſures were crowned to give entertainment to every ſenſe. In ſhort, the windows of heaven will be open from above to diſcharge deſtruction on the heads of ſinners, and the earth from beneath will vomit out ſtreams of overflowing fire; and the wicked ſhall be incloſed by the burning elements, the furnace they have heated with the briars and thorns of their former iniquities.

Fourthly. The time of the diſſolution is the day of judgment, or the ſecond coming of the Son of God. For St. Peter ſays, *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe,* &c. The merciful Saviour bears with the wicked, that none may complain that he wanted time to repent:

repent and be saved. He continues to bear, if they will not repent, till the measure of their sin be full and overflow; till the mystery of iniquity, or methods of error be discovered and known, that God may be justified, and sinners confounded; that his goodness may be acknowledged in forbidding wickedness, and his justice in the punishments inflicted upon it. He bears with sinners, till the righteousness of the just, and the number of the sufferers be finished and compleat; till virtue and truth have attained to the maturity of beauty and strength. When this is done, Christ will appear to reward the righteous, and to punish the wicked. He will then appear, not in weakness, not with the humble and despised attendance of a few fishermen, nor surrounded with false and insidious pharisees, but incircled with saints, attended with angels, and invested with power and great glory. He will then appear, not as a Lamb appointed to be slain for the sins of the world, but in the character of a Lion of the tribe of Judah, to protect his friends and devour his enemies; with the government on his shoulder instead of the cross, and with his arms stretched out not as a sufferer, but to embrace the righteous and bring down the wicked. He will then come, not to propose the covenant or grace, but to make enquiry how it has been observed; who have maintained or corrupted the truth; who have confessed or denied him in public; what sin has been covered with the cloak

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of hypocriſy and guile; what committed without ſigns of ſhame in the eyes of the world, and with no remorſe in the ſecret of the ſoul; what avowed, defended, and applauded by profligate ſinners; and what duties omitted or deſpiſed as hindrances of the happineſs of this preſent life, and the badges of a ſervile and degenerate ſpirit. *Becauſe the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great,* ſays God, *and becauſe their ſin is very grievous, I will go down now, and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me.* And in like manner, when the cry of the ſins of the inhabitants of the earth ſhall reach unto heaven, the Son of God, the Judge of the world, will deſcend to enquire, and utterly deſtroy it as he did Sodom.

The coming of the Lord to perform this great and wonderful work will be ſudden and unexpected, like that of a thief, who ſurprizes a careleſs and ſecure family in the ſilence of the night. He will viſit the world in the midnight of its wickedneſs, when the nations ſleep in the darkneſs of error, and the ſhadow of death, forgetful of God, and drunk with the pleaſures of a ſenſual converſation. He will then come, and awaken the world; as he did Egypt, with the terrors of his judgments, and deliver his church afflicted and diſtreſſed, by deſtroying the oppreſſor. His coming will be ſudden as the ſwift lightning, not to the righteous who watch and

pray,

pray, but to careleſs ſinners, fixed on the pleaſures, profits, and honours of this preſent world, who ſatisfied or amuſed with ſenſible good, have no deſire of heavenly enjoyments; and who leading a life which conſcience condemns, caſt off the thoughts of the Judge of the world, whoſe coming is dreadful to unrepenting ſinners.

Since then Chriſt will appear when ſinners are ſecure; ſince he comes as a Judge to condemn ſinners; ſince the heavens will be diſſolved, and the earth burnt, and the wicked periſh in this general ruin: how does it concern us to prepare for his coming by repentance and faith? If Chriſt be our Judge, let nothing remain that may make us afraid of his future appearance. If the heavens will be diſſolved, and the earth burnt, why ſhould we purſue the things of this world with ſolicitude and fear! To what purpoſe ſhould we amaſs riches, which are out of proportion to the comforts of life? Build pompous and expenſive ſeats, which we cannot fill, or but ſeldom viſit? And multiply lands, whoſe cares increaſe together with their fruits, but with this difference, the fruits for others, and the cares for ourſelves? Why ſhould we wear out the few days of a temporary life in this fruitleſs labour, which is little more than heaping up fewel, for the dreadful fire of the laſt day. And if this change is the effect of ſin, and the puniſhment of it, why do we defer to part with our ſins, which end in ſo certain and frightful a ruin? Let none deceive himſelf,

himſelf, that *the day of the Lord is afar off*, that ages will go on in a long ſucceſſion, as ages are paſt, before his appearance; but rather conſider that for ought he knows the time may be ſhort; or ſhould it be otherwiſe, that death is near, though it ſeems to lag, and come in the rear of multitude of days, or threeſcore and ten years. And Solomon tells us, *Where the tree falleth, there it ſhall lie*; or that he who deſcends a ſinner to the grave, can have little hope of riſing a ſaint. *Ye therefore, beloved, ſeeing ye know theſe things before, beware leſt ye alſo being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own ſtedfaſtneſs. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. To him be glory both now, and for ever. Amen.*

II. I proceed to the ſecond article propoſed to be conſidered; namely, the extent and cauſe, the the end and time of the renovation following: *nevertheleſs we, according to his promiſe, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs.* It cannot be ſuppoſed that this viſible world, which the fire ſhall conſume, will always continue a deſolate heap, or perpetual monument of God's indignation. For how can we believe that the goodneſs of God, which raiſed this beauteous ſyſtem of beings from the watry chaos, will not reſtore it in the like characters of wiſdom and power, from the rubbiſh and diſhonour to which it is reduced by the fire

of

of his wrath? If he raiſes the bodies of deceaſed ſaints, notwithſtanding they are blended with common duſt, to immortality and glory: how can we believe, that this viſible world, the dwelling of man, which his ſin has corrupted, ſhall not be reſtored through the righteouſneſs of man, to a new ſtate of perfection and beauty? Can we poſſibly think, that the things which were made for *the pleaſure of God*, and have no will to reſiſt and offend him, will be ſuffered to continue in ſuch a condition, as diſcovers the marks of the higheſt diſpleaſure? Or that Almighty God, whom none can contend with in counſel and might, will ſuffer the devil to triumph over his work, and perſuade ſinners that he is ſtronger to deſtroy, than the author of nature to preſerve or renew it? No, the happy ſtate which all things ſhall be placed in by a ſecond act of divine goodneſs, will convince the wicked and their proud leader, that the counſel of God cannot be fruſtrated; that oppoſition tends to illuſtrate his power and goodneſs the more, and to finiſh the ſcheme which his wiſdom has contrived, with the greateſt joy to the creature renewed, and tribute of praiſe and honour to himſelf. Since then ſcripture aſſures us that all things ſhall be reſtored, and reaſons are ſuggeſted by the mind of man to ſecond revelation; I ſhall enter upon the particulars I promiſed to conſider.

Firſt then, the renovation of the world, which the text ſpeaks of, is of equal extent with the ruin of

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it: that is, as the heavens ſhall be diſſolved, the elements melt, and the earth be burnt up: ſo the power of God will diſplay itſelf again, in reforming and improving them with freſh occaſions of perfection and beauty, which will never give way to a ſecond change. Whether God will proceed by the ſame ſteps in renewing the world, as he did in creating it, none can determine without revelation; but this we are ſure of, there will *be new heavens and a new earth.* The moon that appeared in the likeneſs of blood, will put on the ſplendor of the mid-day ſun; and the ſun that was black as ſack-cloth of hair, will ſhed forth his light with vigorous rays of ſurprizing brightneſs. As it is written, *The light of the moon ſhall be as the light of the ſun; and the light of the ſun ſhall be ſeven-fold, as the light of ſeven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the ſtroke of their wound.* The earth will pour forth its richeſt ſtores from its inmoſt boſom; and the air inſpire immortality and joy into every creature, the fitteſt medium for the mouth of ſaints continually employed in ſinging the praiſes of their great Creator. Every thing will ſhare according to its rank in the bleſſings derived on redeemed man. As it is written, *The creature itſelf alſo ſhall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.* That is, nothing will be left of the noxious qualities of the old world, which ſin had corrupted. The beams of the ſun will

will torment none with excefs of heat, whofe mild influence fuffers no change from the vial of wrath; nor the pale light of the moon chill, where the fhadows of the night can never prevail, nor fucceed the brightnefs of eternal day. The terrors of thunder will reprove none, whom God fpeaks to in the ftill voice of tendernefs and love; nor the ftorm and whirlwind harrafs the earth, where peace reigns, and adjufts and compofes the paffions of men. And laftly, the pillars of the earth will never be moved, the hearts of whofe inhabitants are unchangeably fixed on the rock of ages. For it is reafonable to believe, that *the new heavens and the new earth* will be every way perfect in proportion to the dignity and glory of man, its appointed inhabitant.

Secondly. The caufe of the renovation of the heaven and the earth, is the Son of God, and that in refpect,

Firft, Of his merit.

Secondly, Of his power.

Firft. The Son of God is the meritorious caufe of the reftitution of all things, that is, all things fhall be reftored by the power of God, for the fake of the righteoufnefs of the *fecond Adam*, as all things were curfed, and confequently undone, by the fin of the *firft*. For it cannot be fuppofed, that the fin of the one fhould prevail more to provoke the juftice of Almighty God, than the righteoufnefs of the other to move his compaffion. And if God created the heaven and the earth,

earth, a world of perfection, beauty, and delight, and furniſhed it with variety of natural good for the happineſs of man, who had no being till every thing was prepared to receive and entertain him, and in conſequence of it had merited nothing at the hand of God: how can we conceive, that a new world will not be framed by the ſame power, and ſtored and enriched with the greateſt bleſſings which the nature of man is capable of enjoying, for the Son of his love, who fulfilled righteouſneſs in a ſtrict obſervance of the duties of the law? If we take a view of events paſt, or of changes to come, as recorded and foretold in the ſacred writings, it will evidently appear that natural bleſſings are generally the reward of national righteouſneſs. *If ye walk in my ſtatutes*, ſays God, *and keep my commandments, and do them: then I will give you rain in due ſeaſon, and the land ſhall yield her encreaſe, and the trees of the field ſhall yield their fruit, and your threſhing ſhall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage ſhall reach unto the ſowing time: and ye ſhall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land ſafely.* And we do not find, that the dews of heaven, the riches of the earth, kind ſeaſons, and domeſtic proſperity were wanting to the Jews, while their righteouſneſs was greater to bring down a bleſſing, than their ſin to prevent it. Nay, the faith of *one* has prevailed with God to remove the defects introduced by *ſin* into natural bodies. For *Elijah* prayed, *And the hea-*

ven

ven that was as iron poured down rain, and the earth which was as braſs gave forth her fruit, as he ſaid, to *Ahab*; *As the Lord God of Iſrael liveth before whom I ſtand, there ſhall not be dew nor rain theſe years, but according to my word.* The power of the keys was committed to his hands in a natural ſenſe, to ſhut heaven and open it again for the reproof, conviction, and puniſhment of ſinners. In like manner the barren ground which Jericho ſtood in, was made fruitful by another prophet healing the ſprings that watered the ſoil. If we look forwards, and conſider the changes and revolutions to come, the perfection of the church in the fulneſs of the Gentiles, and the converſion of the Jews, will be followed with improvements in the ſtate of nature. *Ye ſhall go out with joy*, ſays the prophet, *and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills ſhall break forth before you into ſinging, and all the trees of the field ſhall clap their hands. Inſtead of the thorn ſhall come up the fir tree, and inſtead of the briar ſhall come up the myrtle tree.* If then viſible things will receive ſuch improvements on account of the church, if the bleſſings of nature were diſpenſed to the Jews in proportion to their righteouſneſs in obſerving the law; and prophets could prevail with Almighty God to renew the bleſſings which heaven and earth were deprived of through ſin; if the righteouſneſs of man could prove an occaſion of reviving the world in the manner I have mentioned, notwithſtanding

ſtanding it muſt periſh in the general burning of the laſt day: what perfection will it not recover, what improvements will it not receive through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, when the church ſhall be united in one pure and undefiled body to the Lord its head, and become the object, together with Chriſt, of the riches of the goodneſs, and bounty of God?

Secondly. The Son of God is, together with the Father, the efficient cauſe of *the new heaven and the new earth*; for it is reaſonable to believe that the world will be renewed by the ſame power which created it at firſt. *I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the ſhadow of my hand*, ſays the Father to the Son, *to plant the heavens, and lay the foundation of the earth.* The miracles he wrought in ſtilling the winds and calming the ſea, ſhewed his dominion both in heaven and earth, and the cures he performed on the bodies of men, as healing the ſick, giving feet to the lame, and eyes to the blind, and raiſing the dead, are undoubted proofs that no decay can reduce the world to ſuch a condition, that it cannot be renewed by the power of Chriſt. For what can be impoſſible to the Son of God, *the reſurrection and the life?* Or what creature cannot be reſtored by the power of him, who will raiſe man, the moſt perfect of all, at the laſt day?

Thirdly. The end of the renovation of heaven and earth is,

Firſt,

First, That the goodneſs, wiſdom, and power of God may be better diſcerned in his new works than they were in the old. The works of God are a kind of mirror that reflects his perfections; which if ſullied through ſin, conveys but a faint and imperfect idea of his power and Godhead. Hence it has come to paſs, that men unacquainted with the riſe, progreſs, and conſequences of ſin, obſerving the defects and diſorders in the world, and inferring well that they could not proceed from a wiſe, good, and allpowerful being, have denied his efficiency in producing the world, and have rather aſſigned it to blind chance, an evil God, or ſome other weak and inſufficient cauſe. But when all things ſhall be renewed, and appear in the brightneſs of unſullied beauty with their complement of perfections, it is then that the greatneſs and goodneſs of God will ſhine in his works, every thing will ſtrike and conduct the eye to the author of it: the characters of his Godhead will be deeply engraven in every object, and nothing unworthy of ſo perfect a cauſe will give an occaſion to queſtion the truth of his making the whole.

Secondly, The end of the renovation of heaven and earth is, that righteouſneſs may reign in the new frame and ſyſtem of beings. The apoſtle expreſſes it in the following words, *Nevertheleſs, we according to his promiſe, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs.* The preſent world, through the wick-

ednefs of man, and the malice of Satan, is the theatre of fin, and a conftant provocation of the anger and juftice of Almighty God. The weakneſs of the fleſh, the myſtery of iniquity, and the wrath of God have been partly diſplayed, and will be fully diſcovered in this field of battle between light and darkneſs, heaven and hell. Idols have been ſet up in the place of God, and honoured with the tribute of prayer and thankſgiving, which is only due to infinite power and infinite goodneſs. Evil concupiſcence has been more complied with than the dictates of truth, the love of God, and obligations to charity. And authority and power conferred upon ſome for the benefit of the whole, have been chiefly employed by cruel, faithleſs, and ambitious men, in acts of oppreſſion, and building their greatneſs on the induſtry of others. And to ſum up all, the reigning city, or prevailing ſtate of the governments of the world, is deſcribed in the figure of *Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth.* But the caſe will be otherwiſe in *the new heaven and the new earth*, which will pour down righteouſneſs and bring forth truth. The Spirit of God, which animates the ſaints as the ſoul the body, will unite them together under Chriſt their head in the ſame knowledge of divine truth, in the ſame love and obedience to God, in the ſame affection one towards another, and in the ſame endeavours to preſerve and promote the happineſs of the aſſembly, which each is a part of the

the being of God, his perfection, and authority will be fully acknowledged; his laws obeyed with diligence and chearfulness; his mysteries understood, or received with humility; his justice revered; his goodness admired; and himself worshipped in Spirit and truth. The œconomy of the word in a body of flesh, the series of wonders ensuing thereupon, and the dignity of his nature will no longer be matter of contradiction and strife, but confessed in a manner becoming those, who enjoy the redemption obtained by his blood. And himself will be joined with the Father and Spirit, in the worship and praises of angels and men. Religion will be pure, and without the mixture of hypocrisy and deceit, virtue without presumption, love without dissimulation, honour without pride, power without oppression, and knowledge without conceit. No one's abundance will create envy where every one is full: no one's distinction, where every one is satisfied with his own lot. The modesty of all will render it agreeable to prefer each in honour to himself. And selfishness will be lost in the spirit of love, which is public, disinterested, and directs the actions of every part to the good of the whole.

Thirdly, The end of the renovation of heaven and earth is, that the righteous may be comforted, and receive a reward for the troubles they have suffered, and the good they have done in this present life. According to scripture the

righteous are *ſtrangers* and *pilgrims* in the world. The manners, language, and proſpects of men are different from theirs. The God, they worſhip, is not *the prince of the power of the air*; nor the city, they ſeek, Babylon the Great, the ſeat of pride, confuſion, and injuſtice. For which reaſon they are little regarded by worldly-minded men, as unfit inſtruments for the purpoſes of life, who for want of complying with the ſecret maxims which the world ſteers by, whatſoever ſhew it may outwardly make of juſtice and truth; and who fixing their thoughts on a future ſtate, inſtead of the preſent, are unqualified thereby to ſupport the grandeur and intereſt of government, and bear the honours and rewards of merit. Nay, it is well for them if they eſcape ſo, and are not repreſented in the black character of enemies to the ſtate, which was Haman's artifice to deſtroy the Jews, who addreſſed himſelf thus to his abuſed maſter. *There is a certain people ſcattered abroad, and diſperſed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom, and their laws are diverſe from all people, neither keep they the king's laws; therefore it is not for the king's profit to ſuffer them. If it pleaſe the king let it be written that they may be deſtroyed.* But howſoever they may fare in this preſent life, the world to come is alloted to the righteous, who will not be pilgrims but inheriters of it; to the righteous and deſpiſed, who have walked by faith in a ſenſual generation, been juſt with the fraudulent;

fraudulent; temperate and modeſt, in affluence and riches; pure and unſullied in the midſt of temptations; and conſtant and true in times of defection. Who have fed the hungry, comforted the afflicted, and honoured virtue in poverty and diſtreſs, and will therefore be juſtified by the Son of God with ſuitable returns for their confidence and hope. The countenance of theſe, whom the world treated as madmen or fools, will ſhine like the ſun with the brightneſs of wiſdom; and their hands be ſtrengthened with the rod of power, whom the proud cruſhed as weak and contemptible. The ſheep-ſkins and goat-ſkins which covered their nakedneſs, and the dens and caves which received them in their diſtreſs, will be turned into garments of beauty and joy, and everlaſting manſions of pleaſure and peace. The bleſſed angels which aſſiſted them in their troubles as miniſtring ſpirits and concealed friends, will converſe with them, now without any reſerve, as companions in their joy; and will join in praiſes to Almighty God for the happy iſſue of their care and fidelity. And the Spirit of God by preſenting to their mind the beautiful viciſſitudes of juſtice and pity, mutually contending in paſt ages to puniſh or forgive the inhabitants of the earth, will enlarge their ſouls with a vaſt proſpect of the depths of the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, that will prove an occaſion of increaſe of joy, and of repeated praiſes to Almighty God for their ſafe paſſage to the re-

gions of bliſs, through ſuch various ſcenes of trial and danger. The bleſſings of this ſtate may partly be conceived by conſidering the ſorrows and evils of the preſent. For if bodily pains may prove ſo exceſſive as to drive the patients into fits of deſtraction, what extaſies of divine joy will not be raiſed from impreſſions of pleaſure on glorified bodies! If contempt from their brethren juſtly deſerved becomes inſupportable, and compels many for preſent relief to deprive themſelves of life and ſociety together, what will be the pleaſure which the ſoul will experience from honours received in the aſſembly of the bleſſed? And if loſs of fortune fills us with anxiety, and the ſenſe of the inſtability of human affairs mixes our enjoyments with the fear of changes, how will the happineſs of the ſaints in light be perfect and conſummate, who abound with the riches of divine goodneſs, and have this added to their other felicity, that the comforts they enjoy will ever be the ſame, or ſuffer no change but that of improvement?

Fourthly and *laſtly*, The end of the renovation of heaven and earth is, that God may rejoice any reſt in his works. The viſible world is the temple of God, which no ſooner was made, then he ſhewed his delight in the work of his hands by pronoucing it *good*. But this pure ſtate being ſoon corrupted by man's diſobedience the ſymbols of his preſence began to withdraw, and the world was expoſed to a long train of multiform evils,

evils, that in proceſs of time will utterly diſſolve it. Since this fatal and unhappy divorce, the world is in bondage to a new lord, whom the ſcripture ſtyles the God of this world; an impotent being, empty of good, whoſe beſt returns for the honours he receives are diſſapointment and ſorrow in the higheſt degree. But the myſtery of iniquity being once finiſhed the caſe will be otherwiſe *in the new heaven and the new earth*, which righteouſneſs dwells in. The glory of God will return to his work, which is perfect in goodneſs, and cannot be defiled with a ſecond offence. That is, as the tabernacle and temple finiſhed and prepared for the ſervice of God, were both over ſhadowed with the ſymbol of his preſence: ſo God's delight in his new works, will be publickly declared by his viſible preſence ſhining through the whole, and dwelling with his church for ever and ever. This glorious ſtate is deſcribed thus in figures adapted to our preſent conceptions, *Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they ſhall be his people, and God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God. And God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain: for the former things are paſſed away.* And again, *There ſhall be no more curſe: but the throne of God and of the Lamb ſhall be in it; and his ſervants ſhall ſerve him.— And there ſhall be no night there, and they need*

need no candle, neither light of the ſun: and they ſhall reign for ever and ever. For if all the evils we can poſſibly ſuffer, principally ariſe from the want of the favour of Almighty God, or from the power of his wrath, how will the pleaſure of life be compleat and with what joys will the ſoul ſwell when the light of his countenance ſhines on the chruch with perpetual ſmiles, and it is cheriſhed and embraced in the arms of his love.

The laſt particular, I ſhall now ſpeak to, is the time of the renovation of heaven and earth. It cannot be expected that the new ſhould appear till the old vaniſh. It will fare with the world as it does with man, the body muſt periſh before it can riſe, and the world be diſſolved before it can appear in the new dreſs of immortality and glory. *I ſaw*, ſays St. *John*, *a new heaven and a new earth; for the firſt heaven and the firſt earth were paſſed away, and there was no more ſea.* This is the end of the œconomy of Chriſt in the nature of man, to exalt all things to a fixed ſtate of perfection and glory; which cannot be attained to till his triumphs are compleated in the conqueſt of death the laſt enemy. But death being deſtroyed by the power of God which raiſeth up the dead, and the earth with the wicked conſigned to the fury of devouring fire, a new world will ariſe for the reſt and habitation of the juſt, where their paſt ſorrows will be no more felt, than the pleaſures of wicked in their

place

place of torment. For the period of judgment being now finiſhed the ſeaſon of love will immediately commence; and the Son of God like a great conqueror, who has nothing to do but to enjoy the peace he has purchaſed with his ſword, will put off his *veſture dipt* in *blood*, his *garments of vengeance*, and his *cloke* of *zeal*, and converſe with his church in the pleaſing dreſs of meekneſs and love; both receiving the honours of a grateful people, whoſe hearts overflow with a ſenſe of the wonders he has done for them, and filling their ſouls again in return with the ſweet variety of divine good, the treaſures opened to his great merit, which no enjoyment can ever exhauſt.

But here I muſt ſtop, being loſt in a ſtate, whoſe exceſs of light puts out the eyes of our weak minds, and whoſe exceſs of good inebriating the foul ſurpaſſes expreſſion, and renders the tongue of him who attempts to deſcribe his happineſs, like the tongue of a man aſtoniſhed with wine. All that I can do, having thus conducted you to this proſpect of bliſs, is earneſtly to wiſh, and ſeriouſly to entreat you, ſo to demean yourſelves in this life of trouble, that your labours being ended, you may reſt for ever with the Son of God, in the world of peace, in the land of plenty, in the joyful city, and in the boſom of his love.

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